

Twenty-four, seven. (24/7)

Meaning

All the time, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Examples

- 1 It doesn't matter where you live; USA, UK, Europe, Australia, or even Asia you can buy this fish oil anytime and every single day (24-hour/7-day).
- 2 The hotel has a large fitness area which is open 24/7, where the guests can work out and relax free of charge.
- 3 There's no way to cross the border because they're monitoring all the passage ways twenty-four, seven.

Turn a blind eye

Meaning

If you turn a blind eye to something that is happening, you deliberately ignore it because you do not want to take any action over it.

Examples

- 1 The principal decided to turn a blind eye to the students' misconduct this time with a hope that they won't do it again.
- 2 As a police officer, you can't turn a blind eye to any of the illegal activities around you.
- 3 The government shouldn't turn a blind eye to matters that concern the people's welfare.

Trump/best/strongest card

Meaning

An advantage that makes you more likely to succeed than other people, especially something that other people do not know about.

Examples

- 1 When his father refused to let him have his own way, the child played his trump card by crying.
- 2 I have a feeling the prosecution still hasn't played their best card in this trial. I expect a big revelation during tomorrow's testimony.
- 3 If

Take something to next level

Meaning

To improve something, or make something better or more useful than it already is.

Examples

- 1 Basically, he needs to push himself and try and take his music to the next level.
- 2 We can sit back and enjoy the ride, or we can work hard and take the company to the next level.
- 3 The only way to take your driving skills to the next level is to practice, practice, practice!

Speak for itself

Meaning

If something speaks for itself, it is clear and needs no further explanation.

Examples

- 1 The professor's charisma speaks for itself. All the students love him.
- 2 I certainly don't have anything to prove, my record speaks for itself.
- 3 A mother's words are words of wealth, and a mother's love speaks for itself.

Speak one's mind

Meaning

To say exactly what you think or feel about something very directly and honestly.

Examples

- 1 Jenny is very shy, she always hesitated about speaking her mind.
- 2 You speak your mind when you think the other person needs to know the truth.
- 3 My mother always speaks her mind because she is a very honest person.

Shoulder the responsibility

Meaning

To accept or take the responsibility.

Examples

- 1 It's usually women who shoulder the responsibility for the care of elderly relatives.
- 2 It's part of manager's job to shoulder the responsibility of complaints made by guests.
- 3 Lama shoulders the responsibility of taking care of her mother.

Around/Round the clock

Meaning

Continuing, or lasting 24 hours a day.

Examples

- 1 The new restaurant is said to be open round the clock. Let's go there after work today to check how good it really is.
- 2 She needed round-the-clock care when she was in hospital.
- 3 Banks with ATM (automatic teller machines) stay open around the clock.

Return the favour

Meaning

When someone does something nice for you. and you do something nice back to them, it's called "returning the favour"

Examples

- 1 Today, lunch is on us. You paid last time and we would like to return the favour.
- 2 You always make our coffee in the morning. Let me return the favour. I'll make it today and you stay in bed.
- 3 I always feel the need to return the favour when someone does something nice to me.

Read between the lines

Meaning

To understand the hidden meaning or to find a meaning that's intended or implied but not directly expressed in something written or said.

Examples

- 1 A good writer doesn't tell the reader everything directly but leaves it up to the reader to figure things out for themselves by reading between the lines.
- 2 Maria said she could afford the expenses of the trip, but reading between the lines, I don't think she has enough money.
- 3 The story itself was pretty straightforward; there was not much to read between the lines.

Pay a visit

Meaning

To visit someone or to go somewhere to spend time with (someone such as a friend or relative.)

Examples

- 1 Please **pay a visit** to our house whenever you are in town.
- 2 If you have time, **pay a visit** to city art gallery.
- 3 Did you **pay a visit** to the leaning tower in Pisa while you were in Italy?

Out of this world

Meaning

If you say that something is out of this world, you are emphasizing that it is extremely good, extraordinary or impressive.

Examples

- 1 The Italian food in that restaurant is out of this world. It's so delicious!
- 2 The music in the show was fantastic and the costumes were out of this world.
- 3 The scenery in Florence city is out of this world.

Out of sorts

Meaning

To feel slightly ill, upset, or unhappy.

Examples

- 1 The baby is out of sorts. Maybe she's getting a new tooth.
- 2 He's usually out of sorts early in the morning.
- 3 It must have been a new environment that put him out of sorts.

Out of the question

Meaning

If you say that something is out of the question, you are emphasizing that it is completely impossible or unacceptable.

Examples

- 1 Right now, a new car is out of the question, we can't afford it.
- 2 Another trip abroad this year is out of the question.
- 3 It is out of the question for me to build a new house till my income becomes greater.

(You) mark my words

Meaning

You say it when you tell someone about something that you are certain will happen in the future, and want them to remember these words of yours.

Examples

- 1 Mark my words, that car will break down on the way there.
- 2 It will snow in Greenland this winter; you mark my words.
- 3 They are going to regret firing him, you mark my words.

Make yourself at home

Meaning

If you make yourself at home somewhere, you relax and feel comfortable as if you were in your own home.

Examples

- 1 Rebecca's mom welcomed us with a warm smile, then led us into the living room and said, "While I get some drink for you, please, have a seat and make yourself at home."
- 2 Finally, we've given you the keys of the apartment so you can be completely independent and make yourself feel at home.
- 3 Please have a seat, make yourself at home and enjoy the conversation with each other while I get some grilled fish and pasta ready for lunch.

Make the most of something

Meaning

To take fullest advantage of, to gain the greatest possible advantage from something, utilize fully.

Examples

- 1 The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything, they just **make the most of everything** that comes along their way.
- 2 The very best thing you can do for the whole world is to **make the most of yourself**.
- 3 We've only got one day in Paris, so we'd better **make the most of it**.

Make someone's day

Meaning

To make someone happy, or be a source of satisfaction or happiness for the rest of the day.

Examples

- 1 Seeing those little kids in playground having so much fun just made my day.
- 2 Waking up early in the morning and seeing a beautiful sunrise really makes my day.
- 3 Hearing the voice of my beloved friend on phone after a long time really made my day.

Just in case

Meaning

We use this expression to talk about doing something as a preparation for a situation that may happen.

Examples

- 1 I took two pens with me to examination hall, just in case one of them runs out of ink.
- 2 Here's a contact number, just in case there should be a problem.
- 3 You should take your credit card with you on your trip just in case you run out of your cash.

Join hands with

Meaning

Literally, to hold hands with someone.

Figuratively, to work together to achieve some goal.

Examples

- 1 Let's join hands and pray together for the peace of the world.
- 2 The American soldiers joined hands with the British soldiers in the war against Germany.
- 3 The teacher said, "kids, join hands and stand in a circle."

It's on me

Meaning

I will pay this bill. (Usually a bill for a meal, drinks or something purchased).

I am responsible. I'll take the blame for the situation.

Examples

- 1 It's on me. I'm buying three of you the tickets to your favorite show tonight.
- 2 As the waiter set down the glasses. Harry said. "It's on me." and grabbed the check.
- 3 Both Julia's mom and her stepmom hate each other, so it's on her to make sure they both show up to the wedding and don't fight with each other.

In a row

Meaning

If something happens a number of times in a row, it happens many times without a break.

Examples

- 1 Monica has won five tennis matches **in a row**. She is thinking of playing professionally.
- 2 My family and I have gone on vacation to Rome for three years **in a row**. I really want to go somewhere different this year.
- 3 My friend has given me something really special for three birthdays **in a row**. I hope he'll give me something nice again this year too.

If I recall/remember correctly

Meaning

You say it when you're trying to remember something, but you're not sure that you're remembering it correctly or not.

Examples

- 1 He was mayor from 1945 to 1949, if my memory serves me right.
- 2 If I remember correctly, I first went to London in June 1999.
- 3 If I recall correctly, at the next intersection we will have to turn left.

Good with words

Meaning

Skillful at using words.

Examples

- 1 I am not so good with words, you know I can't speak what's in my heart, but I need to say what matters to me, though I don't know how to start.
- 2 She is shy and rather not so good with words, so she had always feared speaking in public.
- 3 She might not be good with words but she is brilliant at thinking.

Good for nothing

Meaning

A person of little worth or usefulness. An irresponsible or worthless person.

Examples

- 1 While his father works hard each day. his good-for-nothing son hangs around in the bars.
- 2 She told him he was a lazy good-for-nothing and should get a job.
- 3 She called him' a lazy, deceitful and good-for-nothing.

Give someone space

Meaning

To allow someone to have time by themselves, to leave someone alone, avoid contacting someone again and again.

Examples

- 1 The best advice someone gave me, "Give them space if they need, if you don't, you'll get closer to them, and they'll grow away from you.
- 2 Sometimes, all we need is to give ourselves a space and time to relax, reflect and focus on all the amazing things that we've been blessed with in life.
- 3 Sometimes, you've to love people from distance, give them space and time they need.

Get back on one's feet

Meaning

To be well or successful again after being ill or having problems.

Examples

- 1 I am glad to hear that your sister has finally got back on her feet after being ill for 2 months.
- 2 It will take our government some time to sort things out and get the economy of our country back on its feet.
- 3 He's doing everything he can to get his business back on its feet again.

A feast for the eyes

Meaning

Something that pleases your eyes.

An attractive, pleasing or remarkable sight or visual experience.

Examples

- 1 A stroll through Istanbul is a feast for the eyes, the city has impressive architecture, restaurants and cafes, sea views and beautiful mosques.
- 2 His newest movie has such lush cinematography that it is truly a feast for the eyes.
- 3 She emerged in a brand-new designer suit in a movie scene, and I thought she was a feast for the eyes.

A little bird told me

Meaning

It's used to say that you've got information from someone but you're not going to tell who that person or source is.

Examples

- 1 A little bird told me that it's your wedding anniversary this Friday.
- 2 A little bird told me that you're going to have a baby this spring.
- 3 A little bird told me that you've got engaged. Congratulations!

A living hell

Meaning

If you describe a place or situation as a living hell, you are emphasizing that it's extremely unpleasant.

Examples

- 1 A blackmailer who made his terrified victim's life "a living hell" has been arrested.
- 2 In China, industrial smog has made the country a living hell for half a billion people.
- 3 "It's a living hell" says homeless woman about living on streets.

A man of his word

Meaning

A man you can trust, who will do what he has promised to do.

Examples

- 1 You can count on me. If I say that I'm going to help you, I will do it. I'm a man of my word.
- 2 I've found Martin to be a man of his word so far, so I'm confident he'll get us the best deal possible.
- 3 Our president is a man of his word. He never compromised on his principles, even in the hardest times.

A piece of cake

Meaning

A task that is very easy to do.

Examples

- 1 I thought my paper was going to be difficult, but it turned out to be a piece of cake.
- 2 With the proper equipment and knowledge, it's a piece of cake to make delicious cuisines and treats for all your special occasions.
- 3 "Learning to type is a piece of cake. It just takes persistence."

A ray of sunshine

Meaning

Someone or something that makes you feel happy and positive, often during a difficult time.

Examples

- 1 Reading good books is a ray of sunshine for me when I feel gloomy being stuck in a particular situation.
- 2 My family is a ray of sunshine for me in this troubled world.
- 3 It is easy to add joy to a happy person's life but not everyone is a ray of sunshine when one is in need.

A white lie

Meaning

A small or harmless lie that is told in order to be polite or to avoid hurting someone's feelings.

Examples

- 1 Telling your friend that you like their new haircut, when you really don't, is an example of a white lie.
- 2 Many times, a white lie can seem the ideal tool to keep the things around you balanced.
- 3 When she asked me if I liked her new dress, I had to tell a white lie. I thought it looked awful, but I couldn't say so!

Act of God

Meaning

An act of God is an event that is beyond human control such as a flood, hurricane, earthquake, or other natural catastrophe.

Examples

- 1 There's no way to prepare for a sudden act of God like an earthquake.
- 2 Will your insurance company pay for damage caused by earthquakes and other acts of God?
- 3 It was an act of God; the river broke its banks and the town was flooded.

Act your age

Meaning

Behave in a mature way; don't act younger than you are.

Examples

- 1 I am glad that Sarah is so committed to her studies, but sometimes I wish she would act her age and go out with friends a bit.
- 2 John said, "I wish my father would act his age and stop jumping on the trampoline with my friends when they come around. It's so embarrassing."
- 3 If

All walks of life

Meaning

If you meet people from all walks of life, you meet different types of people from different levels of society.

Examples

- 1 Members of the gym include lawyers, teachers, plumbers, and hairdressers - people from all (different) walks of life.
- 2 As a social worker, he interacts with people from all walks of life every day.
- 3 We interviewed people from all walks of life, including doctors, taxi drivers, school teachers and unemployed people.

Apple of one's eye

Meaningⁱ

One's favorite person; the thing or person you love the most.

Examples

- 1 She has three children, but her youngest son is the apple of her eye.
- 2 Rose was a very charming little girl and a very bright student, and was the apple of her teachers' eyes.
- 3 While my grandmother loved all of us very much, my younger brother was the apple of her eye.

Around the corner

Meaning

Not far away, or going to happen soon.

Examples

- 1 When we travelled to Florence in March, it was still cold but spring was just around the corner.
- 2 My house is located in the centre of the city, so it gives me a quick and easy access to the city's main attractions such as shopping area, cosy cafes and bistros. Besides, the main railway station is situated just around the corner from here.
- 3 As your final exams are just around the corner, here's a look at foods that can help boost your brain power.

Bare your heart or soul to someone

Meaning

To tell someone your secret thoughts and feelings.

Examples

- 1 We all need someone we can bare our souls to, someone we can confide in.
- 2 Finally, she bared her soul to him, saying she had always loved him.
- 3 I don't know her that well, so I was surprised that she bared her heart to me.

Be at someone's service

Meaning

To be available to help someone with whatever they need.

Ready to serve, help or cooperate with someone.

Examples

- 1 My car and driver will be at your service during your stay.
- 2 The tour guide said he would be at our service for the rest of the afternoon.
- 3 Our staff is at your service for any further information you may require.

Be in hot water

Meaning

If someone is in hot water, they are in trouble because they've done something wrong.

Examples

- 1 She sent quite a few emails complaining about her boss. Someone forwarded them to boss - She's **in hot water** now.
- 2 If he can't get that bank loan at the end of this month, he'll be **in hot water**.
- 3 Don't try to cheat on your income tax, or you could get **into hot water**.

Be in two minds

Meaning

To be unable to decide or to have difficulty in making a decision between two options.

Examples

- 1 He is in two minds in deciding how to react to the negative remarks of some people on Facebook, whether he should ignore it or respond to it.
- 2 I am in two minds about whether or not to go to the party tonight.
- 3 Steve is in two minds about what to study at university. He's interested in history, but he also likes the idea of being a lawyer.

Be my guest

Meaning

You say it to someone to politely give them permission to do something.

Examples

- 1 "Do you mind if I add you as a friend on Facebook?" "Of course, be my guest."
- 2 "Could I borrow your camera for two days?" "Sure, be my guest."
- 3 "Can I try out your new car?" " Sure, be my guest."

Be on cloud nine/be on top of the world

Meaning

To be extremely happy and excited.

Examples

- 1 Was Sarah pleased about getting the job? "Pleased? She was **on cloud nine**"
- 2 Elena just bought her new car and she is **on cloud nine**.
- 3 Omer was **on cloud nine** on the birth of his first child.

Beyond words

Meaning

An overwhelming situation where one cannot find words to express one's emotions.

Examples

- 1 She is beautiful **beyond words**, with her jet-black hair, hazel eyes and white translucent skin.
- 2 When she boarded the plane for England, she was happy **beyond words**. When she received her first salary, she was happy beyond words.
- 3 If.

Breathe/Heave a sigh of relief

Meaning

To feel calm or relax because something unpleasant or frightening has not happened or has ended.

Examples

- 1 Michelle finally **breathed a sigh of relief** after her husband's hernia operation was successfully completed.
- 2 Everyone in class **heaved a sigh of relief** after that horrible midterm exam was over.
- 3 Residents in coastal areas are **breathing a sigh of relief** now that the storm has passed.

Down to earth

Meaning

Someone who is free of pretension and doesn't act as he is better than others, but who is instead simple and straight-forward.

Examples

- 1 She was friendly and down-to-earth and quickly put me at my ease.
- 2 Jane is a down-to-earth sort of woman with no pretensions.
- 3 I miss my schooldays teacher, Miss Marry, she was really a down to earth lady.
- 4 There're only a few people in the world who are down to earth nowadays.

A fine line

Meaning

If you say that there's a fine line between one thing and the another, you mean that they're very similar, but one thing is acceptable and the other is not.

Examples

- 1 Well, I think there's a fine line between being a terrorist and a freedom fighter.
- 2 There's a fine line between helping your kids with their homework and doing it for them.
- 3 As a new parent, you learn that there's a fine line between looking out for your child's welfare and being over-protective.

Eat like a bird

Meaning

To eat a small amount of food.

Examples

- 1 Don't worry about making extra food for Lama, she eats like a bird.
- 2 Omer is trying to lose weight these days by eating like a bird.
- 3 Anna is so afraid of putting on weight that she eats like a bird.

Eat like a horse

Meaning

To eat a large quantity of food.

Examples

- 1 Clark is staying here for dinner, and he eats like a horse, so you better make some extra food.
- 2 Shawn eats like a horse - there's never enough left for everyone else once he's been at the buffet.
- 3 I eat like a horse after a good walk along the beach - the sea air really stimulates my appetite!

A couch potato

Meaningⁱⁱ

A lazy and inactive person; especially one who spends a great deal of time watching television.

Examples

- 1 Please don't waste your time and lie around like a couch potato all day. Get up and do something productive in your life.
- 2 It's so beautiful outside and all you want to do is watch football match on T.V. Don't be a couch potato.
- 3 Angela wants to marry a man who loves to travel and explore, not a couch potato like him who watches television all the time.

A labour of love

Meaning

A piece of work that you do because you enjoy it not because you'll receive reward or praise for it, even though it involves hard work.

Examples

- 1 She spends most of her free time knitting baby clothes for her friends. It must be a labour of love for her.
- 2 After his first book was published, the author said in an interview that he had greatly enjoyed writing it, and that it was a labour of love.
- 3 The famous painter gifted his most beautiful painting to his wife, saying that it was a labour of love and was not for sale.

A long day in January/a cold day in July

Meaning

Used to describe something that will never happen.

Examples

- 1 It will be a long day in January when our country walks away from the influence of America.
- 2 It will be a cold day in July when America and Iran resolve their bilateral issues.
- 3 I remember a lot of people used to say that it would be a cold day in hell when Justin Trudeau ever become prime minister of Canada.

A picture is worth a thousand words

Meaning

A picture can express some things more clearly or concisely than words can.

Examples

- 1 It's easier to learn how a machine works from pictures rather than descriptions, since a picture is worth a thousand words.
- 2 A good presentation should contain more of graphics and less of text, since a picture is worth a thousand words.
- 3 In order to effectively convey the health hazards of smoking, a cigarette pack now contains a picture of diseased lungs, instead of just the statutory warning message, since a picture is worth a thousand words.

A slip of the tongue

Meaning

A mistake made while speaking.

Something that you say by accident when you intended to say something else.

Examples

- 1 I accidentally called John by his brother's name. It was just a slip of the tongue.
- 2 "Be careful talking to the police tomorrow, one slip of the tongue could get us into big trouble."
- 3 Did I say North Street? Sorry, that was a slip of the tongue — I meant South Street.

Above all/more than anything else/most importantly

Meaning

Used for referring to something that's more important than any of other things you could mention.

Examples

- 1 Maria wants a bicycle, a guitar and **above all**, she wants a piano.
- 2 Joseph is hard-working, cheerful and **above all**, he's an honest boy.
- 3 My new car is very comfortable, have a beautiful interior and **most importantly**, its design appears to be more innovative.
- 4 I am learning English as it's a global language, easy to learn, helps us know about other cultures and **more than anything else**, I love this language.

Be in deep water

Meaning

To be in trouble or in a difficult situation.

Examples

- 1 She felt to be in deep water when she lost her passport just a month before her tour to Australia.
- 2 He found himself in deep water after he ran over a student while drunk driving near Hubei University.
- 3 If you keep buying things on credit at that rate, soon you'll be in deep water.

Be in good/safe hands

Meaning

Be in the care of a responsible or trustworthy person or entity.

Examples

- 1 Don't you worry, your mother is in good hands with our team of nurses.
- 2 Don't worry. Your children are in good hands. Sally is an experienced baby-sitter.
- 3 Don't worry: I gave the necklace to a friend of mine who is a trustworthy person, so it's in safe hands.

Behind closed doors

Meaning

If something is done behind closed doors, it is kept in secret or private, away from public view or any observation.

Examples

- 1 There are many people who make sure their personal matters stay behind closed doors.
- 2 All families have their secrets, whispered stories and arguments behind closed doors.
- 3 All the issues of marital life must be dealt with behind closed doors, if one wants to avoid scandal.

Bite off more than you can chew

Meaning

To take on more responsibility than you can handle.

Examples

- 1 It feels like I bit off more than I could chew when I promised to complete all those worksheets in one day.
- 2 By accepting two part-time jobs, he is clearly biting off more than he can chew.
- 3 Don't bite off more than you can chew - you have so many things to do at the moment, why don't you ask someone else to organize the party?

Break the ice

Meaning

To say or do something friendly to break the silence among people.

Examples

- 1 “When you meet people for the first time, giving them a warm smile can always help you to break the ice.”
- 2 “Riccardo always knows how to say just the right thing to make people feel comfortable – he’s great at breaking the ice.”
- 3 At a party, having everyone tell a story about their hometowns is a way to break the ice.

Burn your bridges or boats

Meaning

To do something in such a way that makes it impossible for you to return back to previous situation again, even if you want to, because you destroyed all the possible ways of going back to that situation.

Examples

- 1 His relationship with Tracy is becoming increasingly tense, so he has decided to **burn his bridges** before the situation gets any more toxic.
- 2 If you want to quit a job, walk away in professional manner, don't **burn your bridges** by making unnecessary comments on the way out, since you never know who you will meet again.
- 3 Franklin would like to reconcile with his old friend, but unfortunately, when they parted company, (ended a relationship with each other) he really **burned his boats** by saying some terrible things to him.

Catch someone's eye

Meaning

To attract someone's attention and make him/her to look at something; to cause someone to notice something or someone.

Examples

- 1 On her way to work on Monday, an array of high-quality bike racks in front of an office building caught her eye.
- 2 I was looking around the store for a present for my friend, and this beautiful handbag caught my eye.
- 3 Maria was riding her bicycle down Valencia Street last Friday evening when a handsome young man caught her eye.
- 4 I happened to gaze out the window early in the morning today and a colourful bird caught my eye.

Come rain or shine /come what may

Meaning

No matter what happens.

Examples

- 1 Every morning at about 5 am. Maria leaves her home for morning run, come rain or shine.
- 2 He seldom drinks alcohol, never touches drugs, and runs six miles every morning, come rain or shine.
- 3 I have decided to go to London to complete my higher education come what may.

Cross one's mind

Meaning

If something crosses your mind, you suddenly think of it for a short period of time.

Examples

- 1 As a recent graduate, you're probably just so happy to be offered a job that the thought of negotiating a salary never crosses your mind.
- 2 "Thinking about dying is something that crosses everyone's mind at a certain point in life.
- 3 When was the first time the idea of working abroad crossed your mind?

Cut from the same cloth

Meaning

Very similar in characteristics or behaviors, alike in many ways, have a lot in common.

Examples

- 1 Julia and her mother are cut from the same cloth as they both are so kind and sweet.
- 2 They both tell lies all the time. Father and son are cut from the same cloth and even sound alike on the telephone.
- 3 When you teach your children, remember that they are not cut from the same cloth, each child has his/her own personality.

Do something to (your) heart's content

Meaning

Do something for as long as you want to do it, to the point of satisfaction.

Examples

- 1 You've got a whole week to yourself and you can read to your heart's content.
- 2 I've made plenty of food for everyone, so please eat to your heart's content.
- 3 She kept buying jewelry to her heart's content but her joy only lasted until her mother saw the bills.

Face the music

Meaning

To confront the unpleasant consequences of one's actions.

Examples

- 1 The children broke the window pane while playing and had to face the music when their parents returned home.
- 2 If you don't complete the project on time, you will have to face the music when the boss asks for a status report.
- 3 He was part of an illegal racing gang, and had to face the music when they were busted.

Food for thought

Meaning

If something gives you food for thought, it gives you insights or new information and makes you think about something carefully.

Examples

- 1 I read newspaper daily to get some food for thought about the current on-goings in the world.
- 2 Today's reading assignment will give you enough food for thought to prepare for next week's class discussion.
- 3 Any plan or project that makes your mind exercise and gives you food for thought is good for you.

For good

Meaning

Permanently, forever.

Examples

- 1 A great poem is like a fountain that overflows **for good** with the waters of wisdom and delight.
- 2 A bad haircut is no fun, but at least you're not stuck with it **for good**, only until it grows out.
- 3 What I like about photographs is that they capture a moment that's gone **for good**, and is impossible to reproduce.

Full of oneself

Meaning

If someone is full of oneself, he thinks that he is clever, special or important in a way that annoys other people.

Examples

- 1 She is a bit full of herself sometimes, and a little controlling, but she is generally a nice girl.
- 2 Some rich youngsters get full of themselves when they drive expensive cars, wear nice clothes and attend big events.
- 3 I must admit that Jacqueline is very pretty, confident and smart girl but she's a bit full of herself and unapproachable.

Give it a go

Meaning

Give it a try, try your hand at.

Examples

- 1 She's been thinking about learning to drive a car for many months, and she's finally decided to give it a go.
- 2 Why not give fishing a go? You may find it easier than you thought.
- 3 I've never baked an apple pie, but I'm willing to give it a go.
- 4 Well, I am not a professional player of Golf like you guys, but I'll give it a go.
- 5 I am not very good at making Italian spaghetti but I like it so much, so I am thinking of giving it a go.

Go a long way

Meaning

To achieve considerable success.

Examples

- 1 Sincerity, honesty and mutual respect go a long way in terms of keeping a relation on good terms with our friends.
- 2 Creativity can go a long way when you're competing with tens of thousands of people in any field.
- 3 The communication skills go a long way towards bridging the gap caused by the physical distance between the two people.

Go with the flow/go with the tide

Meaning

If you go with the flow, you let things happen, rather than trying to change or control them.

Examples

- 1 Don't worry or blame yourself for things out of your control - just go with the flow.
- 2 As far as our expectations go, I have learned not to anticipate what's going to happen but just go with the tide.
- 3 All the while, keep in mind that going with the flow isn't necessarily the best way to stand out from the crowd.

I can't thank you enough

Meaning

We use this expression if someone did something very nice for us, and we're extremely thankful for that, so we feel words aren't enough to show gratitude for what someone has done for us.

Examples

- 1 I can't thank my parents enough for shouldering the burden of my expenses when I was unemployed.
- 2 Mark has been a massive influence on my career and I can't thank him enough for everything he has done for me".
- 3 I can't thank you enough for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to us during our recent visit to your city.

I wasn't born yesterday/who do you think you're fooling?

Meaning

You say it in order to tell someone that you are not stupid and are not easily deceived.

Examples

- 1 You think you can fool me by disguising your voice sound like a girl on telephone, come one man, I wasn't born yesterday.
- 2 Stop giving me lectures on ethics, I know how to behave in social gatherings, I wasn't born yesterday.
- 3 “You really expect me to believe such a lame excuse?” said Mr. Danial. “I wasn’t born yesterday, you know!”.

In line with something

Meaning

In agreement or conformity with, in accordance with.

Examples

- 1 Pensioners get an annual increase **in line with** the cost of living.
- 2 The salaries of temporary employees ought to be brought **into line with** those of permanent staff.
- 3 We're seeking a pay rise that's **in line with** inflation.

Just out of curiosity

Meaning

It simply means that you are interested in knowing something for no other reason except that you just want to know it.

Examples

- 1 I saw an expensive smart phone at a shop but I was not able to buy it (or I didn't want to buy it), though I asked the seller, "Just out of curiosity", how much was that phone?
- 2 I know it's none of my business, but just out of sheer curiosity how much money do you make a month?
- 3 Although the letter wasn't addressed to him, he opened it and started reading it, just out of curiosity.

Keep up appearances

Meaning

To pretend to be happier, less poor. etc. than you really are. because you do not want people to know how bad your situation is or to pretend to be all right or that everything is going well.

Examples

- 1 They were very unhappily married but kept up appearances for the sake of their children.
- 2 They hate each other, but of course they must keep up appearances in front of the sensitive young mistress.
- 3 They had an argument but still managed to keep up appearances in front of their friends.

A know it all

Meaning

A person who acts as though he knows everything and who dismisses the opinions, comments, or suggestions of others.

Examples

- 1 Michael's new friend is such a know-it-all. I can't stand having a conversation with him about anything.
- 2 Franklin is such a know-it-all you can't say a word without him correcting you or arguing with you.
- 3 After Tommy was elected as class president, he would not take suggestions from anyone; he became a know-it-all.

Lend or give someone a helping hand

Meaning

To help someone.

Examples

- 1 Rosie is a wonderful neighbour and friend who loves to lend a helping hand whenever I ask for her help.
- 2 I lent a helping hand in making arrangements for the birthday party of my younger sister.
- 3 Anna always gives her mother a helping hand in cooking meal for her family.

Look or feel like a million dollars

Meaning

To look or feel extremely well, happy or healthy.

Examples

- 1 A quick swim in the morning makes me feel like a million dollars.
- 2 Since I got my hair cut, I feel like a million dollars.
- 3 Since I started jogging every day, I feel like a million dollars.
- 4 Deniz has changed her hair from brunette to blonde, and she looks like a million dollars.

To lose one's cool/ temper or blow one's cool

Meaning

To lose control of one's composure, temper, or nerve in a given situation; to suddenly become angry in a difficult situation.

Examples

- 1 He really **lost his cool** when the waiter dropped some of the food on his clothes.
- 2 The actress seemed to have **lost her temper** at the paparazzi this morning and threatened to hit one of the photographers.
- 3 Avoid situations that generally irritate you, these types of situations might make you **blow your cool**.

Much ado about nothing

Meaning

A situation in which there has been excessive excitement or fuss about something that is not really important.

Examples

- 1 The news of a famous actor's injury while filming a scene in Mexico City sent his fans into a frenzy, but it turned out to be much ado about nothing, it was just a minor knee injury.
- 2 They changed the time of reception at the wedding party and many people were upset but it was really much ado about nothing.
- 3 Some people make a big fuss about which table they get in a restaurant, but as far as I can see, it's much ado about nothing as long as the food is the same.

On a whim

Meaning

To do something spontaneously or without planning it carefully or thinking about it seriously. You just do it because you suddenly feel the urge or desire to do so.

Examples

- 1 I bought that jacket **on a whim**, having seen it by chance in a shop window.
- 2 Last Sunday, I decided to visit countryside **on a whim**.
- 3 After graduation, she moved to Los Angeles **on a whim** and got involved in the world of high fashion.

On the same page

Meaning

Thinking in a similar way.

If two people are on the same page, it is easy for them to understand and agree with each other.

Examples

- 1 I work really well with Steve, because the two of us are on the same page. We agree on almost everything.
- 2 It was so easy to get this project done because we were all on the same page and everyone knew what to do.
- 3 I'm glad we're on the same page about where to go on vacation this year.

Prove your mettle

Meaning

To prove that you are good at doing something by succeeding in a difficult situation.

Examples

- 1 He was an outstanding fighter pilot who proved his mettle in a variety of tough assignments, including two wars.
- 2 He may be the youngest lawyer in the firm, but he certainly proved his mettle in that high-profile murder case.
- 3 As a reporter, she certainly proved her mettle working in the midst of a war zone.

Spill the beans/ let the cat out of the bag

Meaning^{iii iv}

To reveal a secret accidentally or on purpose.

Examples

- 1 We often **spill the beans** when we are not careful with what we say.
- 2 There's a surprise party for Jane on Wednesday. Please keep it under wraps till Wednesday and don't **spill the beans**.
- 3 I was really looking forward to seeing that movie, until Jack **let the cat out of the bag** and told me the ending.
- 4 Finally, the film producer **let the cat out of the bag**, now everyone knows Amy will be given the lead role in the play.

Take someone to task

Meaning

To strongly criticize someone for something they have done wrong.

Examples

- 1 Many people on internet are taking him to task over his remarks containing the elements of racial discrimination.
- 2 Several people took the mayor to task for not improving the condition of water and sanitation system in the city.
- 3 The office administration took him to task for violating the office rules and smoking in the office premises.
- 4 The parents of students took the school principal to task for failing to set high enough standards for its students.

Take the bad with good

Meaning

To accept all the features or parts of something, good and bad or to accept both the negative and positive aspects of something.

Examples

- 1 Marriage can be a wonderfully fulfilling part of life, but it certainly has its own challenges—you just have to take the bitter with the sweet.
- 2 There is no doubt that internet has made our life become easier and more convenient. However, it also contains some unwanted elements or disadvantages. Indeed, we have to take the bad with the good.
- 3 Don't give up on your business just because you lost money this month. You have to take the rough with smooth.

Talk is cheap

Meaning

It is easier to say that you will do something than to actually do it.

Examples

- 1 Carl keeps saying he'll get rid of smoking, but he never does, talk is cheap.
- 2 Lucy keeps saying she'll start morning walk and get into shape soon, but it never happens, well, talk is cheap.
- 3 His brother promised to get him a new laptop till the end of the month, but he didn't, talk is cheap.

There's no accounting for taste

Meaning

There's no way to understand why some people like something while you don't like it at all; there's no explanation for people's likes, dislikes or preferences.

Examples

- 1 How this utter boring movie could be at the top of the box office for three weeks is beyond me. Well, there's no accounting for taste, I guess.
- 2 I can't find the words to describe the feeling I get from the smoke of a cigarette. Why people like smoking is completely beyond me, but as they say, "there's no accounting for taste."
- 3 I can't believe she has just painted her whole room purple. 'Well, there's no accounting for taste.

Tip of the iceberg

Meaning^v

A small, noticeable part of something, especially a problem or difficulty, the total size of which is really much greater.

Examples

- 1 The internet is huge. What you can find through search engines is just the tip of the iceberg.
- 2 The homeless kids who visit us for help are just the tip of the iceberg. There are thousands more we never see.
- 3 The information a person gathers in his lifetime is just a tip of the iceberg, compared to the information that is available in the world.

Under the radar/under the wraps

Meaning

To do something in secretive manner, without attracting attention.

Examples

- 1 The employee didn't want his boss to find out that he was looking for another job, so he did all his searching **under the radar**.
- 2 He has won a lottery of 100,000 dollars on last Friday, but he wants to keep it **under the radar**.
- 3 The storyline of an upcoming movie is being kept **under the wraps**; the director has just revealed that the plot will revolve around a female teacher who's searching for her missing sister.

Under the weather

Meaning

If a person is under the weather, he isn't feeling well; slightly ill.

Examples

- 1 She has just returned from her vacation, but is feeling under the weather and has a sore throat and running nose.
- 2 We had a heavy lunch today, and now I am feeling a bit under the weather.
- 3 He found out that I was under the weather, so he went to a nearby restaurant and brought chicken soup for me.

Wear several or many hats

Meaning

If someone wears many hats, they have different roles or tasks to perform.

Examples

- 1 My brother wears many different hats; he works as a swimming teacher during the day, at night he works in a restaurant, and at the weekend he helps out at a fish farm.
- 2 Marina wears so many hats, she's a teacher, a working house wife, and mother.
- 3 The majority of employers want people they hire to be versatile, able to wear many hats and tackle a variety of roles.

Weather permitting

Meaning

If the weather is fine. If the weather allows.

Examples

- 1 Weather permitting, the plane would land in Egypt tomorrow.
- 2 We're having a barbecue next Saturday, weather permitting.
- 3 Weather permitting, we will go for fishing in a rowboat tomorrow, and bring a fresh supply of fish for our family.

What goes around comes around

Meaning

A person's actions, whether good or bad, will often have consequences for that person.

Examples

- 1 Trust that what goes around comes around, and everyone will get what they deserve, there's some kind of justice out there in the universe.
- 2 I've always been well treated by my friends and I always try to treat them the same way, because I strongly believe in the saying, "What goes around comes around."
- 3 Of course, he's finally being thoroughly investigated for money laundering, he has been involved in this malpractice for years. What goes around comes around.

With all one's heart/from the bottom of one's heart

Meaning

With great sincerity and strength of feeling.

Examples

- 1 I am really grateful to you for helping me find that job. Seriously, I thank you from the bottom of my heart!
- 2 It was really good to have you here and I would like to thank all of you with all my heart.
- 3 I know it's not easy for you to take out time and come to dinner, but you still have come, so I thank you with all my heart.

Live paycheck to paycheck

Meaning

To spend all of the money one earns by or before the next time one is paid, thus saving none or very little in the process.

Examples

- 1 We're already living paycheck to paycheck, so I don't know how we'll manage this sudden increase in our rent.
- 2 There's no way we can even think about travelling to Europe this year, as we are literally living paycheck to paycheck.
- 3 I.....

Come under fire

Meaning

If someone comes under fire, he is being criticized strongly for something he has done.

Examples

- 1 Earlier this week, Google **came under fire** for a pay-per-post campaign promoting its Chrome browser.
- 2 You will definitely **come under fire** if they find out that you were responsible for the printing errors.
- 3 The politician **came under fire** after it was discovered that he had spent campaign money on lavish parties.

It's high time

Meaning

It's used to say that you're late to do something but not too late, so you must not waste time anymore, and should do it immediately or very soon.

Examples

- 1 After months of being unemployed, it's high time Jacob starts a business of his own rather than keep waiting for paid employment.
- 2 Muslim or Christian, we are human beings first. She further said it is high time to show tolerance and respect for each other.
- 3 They have been engaged for 2 years and Jenny thinks it's high time they get married.

Take something to heart

Meaning

If you take something to heart, for instance, someone's behavior or opinion, you are deeply affected and upset by it.

Examples

- 1 Don't take it to heart, he was only joking about your hair.
- 2 Don't take his comments to heart, he's that hard on everyone in the office.
- 3 Her review of your book is stupid. Don't take it so much to heart.

At four o'clock sharp

Meaning

At exactly 4 o'clock; not 03:59 and not 04:01.

Examples

- 1 The boat leaves at 8:59 a.m. sharp. So, if you arrive at 9 o'clock, you will be too late.
- 2 The meeting will start at 4 o'clock sharp, so please be on time.
- 3 The show starts at 7 p.m. sharp, so don't be late or you'll miss the beginning.

Go for it

Meaning

Just do it, or take an action on it.

Used to encourage someone to try to achieve or win something.

Examples

- 1 Martina: I'm going to try out for the basketball team. Do you think I'm tall enough? Riccardo: Sure, you are! Go for it!
- 2 If we want something, then we should go for it in the best possible way we know.
- 3 If making a documentary movie is something that interests you, I say go for it.

No wonder

Meaning

Now I understand why.

You can say 'no wonder' when you find out the reason for something that has been puzzling you for some time.

Examples

- 1 No wonder you've caught cold, you were wearing only a T-shirt the whole day.
- 2 No wonder your plants always die - you don't water them regularly.
- 3 No wonder, you've got a headache, you drank too much coffee last night.

Do justice to someone or something

Meaning

To do something well, to treat or represent someone or something good, beautiful etc. in a way that is as good as they deserve.

Examples

- 1 That photo doesn't do him justice, he's a lot better looking in real life.
- 2 I don't have enough of a vocal range to do justice to that beautiful song.
- 3 His TV set doesn't have the sound quality to do justice to this music

Fine with me/fine by me/okay with me

Meaning

I accept the suggestion, action or decision, the idea is acceptable to me.

Examples

- 1 Arthur: How about having Italian food for dinner tonight? Abigail: Sure. That's **fine by me**. I like Italian food.
- 2 John wanted to go to Egypt for vacation, but it wasn't **okay with his wife**. She really hates hot places.
- 3 Carl: I'd like to get together with you at 3:00 this afternoon. Is that **fine with you**?

A storm in a teacup

Meaning

A lot of unnecessary anger and worry about a matter that is not important.

Examples

- 1 I really think you're making a storm in a teacup over this. It's just a tiny scratch on the car!
- 2 Jane was only five minutes late! You're making a storm in a teacup.
- 3 I saw my neighbours Sue and Jane arguing outside, but it ended up being a storm in a teacup.

Someone's mind goes blank

Meaning

When someone suddenly forgets or is unable to remember or think of something.

Examples

- 1 Even though I'd been preparing for the interview for days, my mind went blank as soon as they started asking questions.
- 2 Ayman knew all his lines in rehearsal, but his mind went blank when he went before an audience.
- 3 If....

A yes-man

Meaning

A person who always agrees with everything their employer, superior, leader, etc. says, and does everything they are told in order to gain favour.

Examples

- 1 I don't want you to be just a yes-man but rather have your own views on things as well.
- 2 I don't like how everyone is a yes-man around me. I'm unable to receive constructive criticism and others' point of view.
- 3 Well, I think that he's just a yes-man and does not have the strength to say what he actually feels in front of his wife.

A man/woman of few words

Meaning

A person who does not talk a lot, and speaks only when he or she has something important to say.

Examples

- 1 Austin is a man of few words, but when he speaks, he usually makes a lot of sense.
- 2 Jerry is a man of few words, but when he speaks it is worth listening to him.
- 3 Despite being a man of few words, Joseph is well-respected in his field because of his actions.

Cross the line

Meaning

If you say that someone has crossed the line or has stepped over the line, you mean that they have behaved in a way that is considered unacceptable.

Examples

- 1 I can tolerate a lot, but they really **crossed the line** when they broke the window pane.
- 2 Speaking that rudely to your teacher, you've definitely **crossed the line**.
- 3 There is a line between joking and being offensive, and he has **crossed that line**.

Answer the call of nature

Meaning

The need to use the toilet.

Examples

- 1 He had to leave the meeting suddenly to answer/obey the call of nature.
- 2 "Can you pull the car over at a rest stop as soon as you can? I need to answer the call of nature."
- 3 The mountain climbers, like everybody else, need to answer the call of nature, and sadly, there are few toilet facilities on mountains.

Work like a charm

Meaning

Work exactly as good as you want, have a good effect or outcome.

Examples

- 1 I just want to thank you for this wonderful remedy for sore-throat, it worked like a charm.
- 2 The cleaning fluid worked like a charm on the carpet stain.
- 3 The new advertisement was so attractive that it worked like a charm by increasing the sales figure.

Ask for trouble

Meaning

Behaving in a way that is likely to cause problems for you.

Examples

- 1 Running fast without warming up properly is asking for trouble, and could easily cause a muscle strain.
- 2 If you drink alcohol before driving, it is really asking for trouble.
- 3 Indulging in arguments about religion and politics on social media, is asking for trouble.

Young at heart

Meaning

A person who is advanced in age but still enjoys things that young people do is said to be young at heart.

Examples

- 1 Elizabeth loves carnivals and fairs; she's a grandmother but she's young at heart.
- 2 His Grandfather is still so young at heart—I can't believe he's wearing fancy shirts and driving expensive cars.
- 3 Mr. Edward is 68 years old but he's still young at heart, he loves walking on the beach and chatting with his friends at the bar.

Not my cup of tea

Meaning

If something is not your cup of tea, it means you don't like, prefer or enjoy doing it.

Examples

- 1 Science fiction movies aren't really my cup of tea. I prefer dramas, comedies and action movies to be honest.
- 2 If sitting and listening to music is not your cup of tea, sightseeing and hiking can be interesting alternatives.
- 3 Some people love playing cricket, but it has never been my cup of tea.

You can say that again!

Meaning

It means you completely agree with what someone has said.

Examples

- 1 Marianna said, "That was an extremely cute outfit that baby was wearing." Lucia replied, "You can say that again!"
- 2 Anna said, "Magdalena is the most lively, kind and interesting person I've ever met." Julia replied, "You can say that again!"
- 3 Looking at the massive mansion Kathy said, "That's very beautiful and a huge living space." Lucy agreed and replied, "You can say that again!"

When it comes to something

Meaning

When you're dealing with something or talking about something.

Examples

- 1 Your communication skills will stand you in good stead **when it comes to** finding a job.
- 2 'No one can hold a candle to him **when it comes to** playing the guitar.
- 3 Kate is not good at history, but **when it comes to** chemistry, she's the best in the class.

Turn over a new leaf

Meaning

To change the way, you behave and start acting in a better way.

Examples

- 1 Smith said he has turned over a new leaf, and that he's going to quit smoking and drinking and start to exercise every day.
- 2 This year I want to turn over a new leaf. I'm going to exercise more and eat healthier food.
- 3 Apparently, she has stopped gossiping and backbiting and promises to turn over a new leaf this year. I will believe it when I see it.

Take something for granted

Meaning

Not value or appreciate somebody or something much just because they are always available to serve, and we've become used to them.

Examples

- 1 The things that we overlook as simple and ordinary and **take for granted** in our life are truly wondrous.
- 2 Many of the things that people in the West **take for granted** are considered to be luxury items in some poor countries.
- 3 I think that you **take your husband for granted**. He is always sending you flowers and doing nice things for you, and you never appreciate it.

Serve the purpose

Meaning

To be useful or helpful in accomplishing some purpose, meet or satisfy the necessary requirements.

Examples

- 1 Every part and organ of our bodies has a role, and it serves the purpose of well-being of the whole body.
- 2 When you communicate, use complex words only if you need a precise meaning, otherwise simple words will serve the purpose.
- 3 Bananas not only satisfy our appetite but they also serve the purpose of providing numerous health benefits.

All around the world/across the globe/all over the world

Meaning

Everywhere, around earth from east to west, or west to east, thus crossing all meridians.

Examples

- 1 English is understood all over the world while Turkish is spoken by only a few people outside Turkey itself.
- 2 The book was translated into many versions and sold all around the world.
- 3 Every year thousands of tourists from all around the world visit Los Angeles.

Before you know it

Meaning

Used to say that something happens very quickly and when you are not expecting it.

Examples

- 1 If you follow the health tips advised by your therapist, your health will improve significantly **before you know it**.
- 2 If you keep spending money more than you earn, you'll be broke **before you know it**.
- 3 I've come to New York, and I'm not far from your house, so I'll be there **before you know it**.

Take/quote something out of context

Meaning

To misrepresent the meaning of an utterance, an action, or a report thereof by omitting or altering the original context in which it was spoken or done.

Examples

- 1 The minister insisted his remarks at a conference were taken out of context by some journalists.
- 2 By taking these words out of context, you have intentionally distorted my meaning to suit your own weak argument.
- 3 You have to be very careful what you say when you're a politician, because the media can take anything you say out of context.

Sleep like a baby

Meaning

To have a very deep and restful sleep; to sleep soundly.

Examples

- 1 I can't believe you walked 6 miles today, you're going to sleep like a baby tonight.
- 2 It never really takes me more than 5 minutes to fall asleep and I would sleep like a baby till the very next morning.
- 3 You will sleep like a baby if you get plenty of exercise during the day.

Pay the price

Meaning

To experience or face the consequences of one's actions or misdeeds.

Examples

- 1 If you get caught violating the traffic laws, you'll have to **pay the price** which could include a heavy fine.
- 2 If you abuse your body now, you'll have to **pay the price** when you're older.
- 3 If you don't get rid of your bad eating habits, you'll have to **pay the price** in the form of poor health.

In the long run

Meaning

Later in the future, after a long time, not immediately.

Examples

- 1 Buying your own house is a big expense at first but in the long run it's cheaper than paying rent.
- 2 I know, it takes a lot of money and immigration process is complex but trust me, once you settle in Spain, it will be better for you in the long run.
- 3 Taking time out to exercise and get fit is time well spent and will benefit you in the long run.

Give someone a cold shoulder

Meaning^{vi}

To deliberately ignore someone or treat someone in an unfriendly way.

Examples

- 1 Well, he may look pretty happy, but he has had to deal with his wife giving him the cold shoulder since a week now.
- 2 She thinks you started that rumor about her — that's why she's been giving you the cold shoulder all day.
- 3 I think you should stop giving Jeff the cold shoulder. I know he upset you but he's really sorry and he wants to reconcile with you.

An open book

Meaning

Someone or something easy to understand or interpret, something very clear.

Examples

- 1 "My whole life has been an open book," said the actor, "but now I want to settle down to a quiet life of my choice."
- 2 The famous CEO always seemed to be an open book, so everyone was very surprised to hear about his dark secret.
- 3 Rebecca can never hide her true feelings. Her face is like an open book to anyone who knows how to read her.

Mr. Right/Miss right

Meaning

The ideal or most suitable man or woman to be in a relationship with or to marry.

Examples

- 1 After her last relationship ended, she decided to stop looking for Mr. Right and focus on other priorities in her life.
- 2 It doesn't matter if you're shy or not rich, God will see to it that Miss Right crosses your path in due time.
- 3 She's not going to get married in a hurry — She's waiting for Mr. Right to come along.

Sell like hot cakes

Meaning

If something is selling like hot cakes, they're very popular and they're sold very quickly and in large numbers.

Examples

- 1 My new e-book is selling like hot cakes. So, I am thinking of offering it in print as well.
- 2 There may come a day in future when electric cars will be sold like hot cakes.
- 3 These days, drone cameras are very popular among video bloggers and selling like hot cakes, as they offer high quality and picturesque views along with complete freedom to navigate in environment without much effort.

Frame of mind/state of mind

Meaning

Our frame of mind is the mood that we are in, which causes us to have a particular attitude towards something.

Examples

- 1 Right now, I'm not in the right frame of mind to discuss about politics.
- 2 Joseph is not in a good state of mind after he has lost his job.
- 3 Gloria has returned from her summer vacations in a very happy frame of mind.

Fish for compliments

Meaning

To try to get people say nice things about you, to try to induce someone to make a compliment about you, to encourage somebody indirectly to praise you.

Examples

- 1 Linda was fishing for compliments about her outfit when she pretended she only took five minutes to get ready!
- 2 Sophia never fishes for compliments; she thinks it's better to let her work speak for her.
- 3 Mark kept saying he couldn't run very fast but he still won the race; I think he was just fishing for compliments.

When/after the dust settles/let the dust settle

Meaning

Let the things become more calm or stable; wait until the things return to normality after something exciting or unusual has happened.

Examples

- 1 I can't do any hiring right now—we're in the middle of an organizational shake-up. But **when the dust settles**, I'd like to talk to you about working here.
- 2 The consequences of the recent assault will only be visible **after the dust has settled**.
- 3 I know things have been really hectic during this project, so let's all take a bit of a break and return to it **after the dust settles** a bit.

At the expense of something or somebody

Meaning

If you achieve something at the expense of something or someone, you do it in a way which might cause them some harm or disadvantage.

Examples

- 1 He did not want to devote more time to his business at the expense of the time he spends with his family.
- 2 The customer would definitely be unhappy if the project is completed earlier at the expense of quality.
- 3 The data suggest to us that the addiction of watching television may offer a short-term pleasure at the expense of long-term social life.

Here we go!

Meaning

An expression used when you are starting to do something or when something is starting to happen.

Examples

- 1 So, **here we go** -- one hundred fun ways to spend money on this free weekend.
- 2 “**Here we go**,” I said as the airplane began to take off from Florida international airport.
- 3 Let me just see if I can find that movie on YouTube --- **here we go**, here's that movie in high quality and with English subtitles.

Here you go/here you are!

Meaning

You can say this when handing something over to someone or doing a favour to them.

Here is the thing you asked for.

Examples

- 1 "Here you go," said the waiter as he put the plate on the table.
- 2 Each time the nurse handed pills to a patient, she said, "Here you are."
- 3 My friend came back with two coffees. While giving me one he said, "Here you go."

By the way

Meaning

We say "by the way" when we introduce a new subject that is not related to the main subject we were talking about before.

Examples

- 1 It was a nice day; the chauffeur drove us straight to the amusement park. **By the way**, which is your favourite place in the city?
- 2 I can't wait to see you at dinner party today, Jane. **By the way**, will you be making the delicious pie for me?
- 3 I'm greatly fascinated by the modern-day inventions. **By the way** your room is comfortably furnished.

Get a life

Meaning

To start being productive in one's own life; to act independently and responsibly.

A rude way to tell someone to mind their own business or stop focusing on unimportant or immature things.

Examples

- 1 You can't just live in Mom and Dad's basement playing video games forever—you need to go out and **get a life**.
- 2 Oh, **get a life**, Ricky, you're the only one who always has to interpret an innocent expression in some disgusting way.
- 3 Why do you always have to interrupt with whatever I do? Just **get a life** man, and focus on your own matters of life.

Face to face

Meaning

If you're face to face with someone, you're together at the same place; facing each other; sitting or standing close together; can talk and look at each other directly and can make an eye contact.

Examples

- 1 At the sea, two couples were seated face to face at a table, in an open-air restaurant, and were enjoying the glasses of fresh juice as they waited for their meal to arrive.
- 2 We were strolling into New York City, and when we turned the corner of 56th street, we came face to face with Mr. Leonardo.
- 3 The two rival politicians Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump came/were brought face to face in a Presidential debate on T.V.

End up (doing something)

Meaning

To be in a particular situation, state, or place after a series of events, especially when you did not plan it.

To find yourself in a place or situation that you did not intend or expect to be in.

Examples

- 1 If you keep missing the classes, you're going to end up failing your grade and having to repeat it.
- 2 If Jimmy keeps spending like this, he's going to end up in debt soon and having to sell his car.
- 3 I think, it is always better to change the topic before we end up having an argument with anyone.

Be on good/friendly terms (with somebody)

Meaning

Having a friendly or pleasant relationship (with someone).

Examples

- 1 People with a good sense of humor are usually on good terms with others.
- 2 She spent most of her life in Bucharest, where she was on friendly terms with many of her neighbours and locals.
- 3 Now, Lucy and Anna are on good terms again —they reconciled with each other after they had an argument last night.

Spread like wildfire

Meaning

If disease, rumour or news spreads like wildfire, it quickly affects or becomes known by more and more people.

Examples

- 1 His interview immediately spread like wildfire, getting millions of YouTube hits, and this made Leo a big internet celebrity.
- 2 The footage of a man assaulting a female tourist on a street spread like wildfire on social media.
- 3 Sometimes it's word of mouth, gossips at work and playground chat that spreads like wildfire.

Play (it) safe

Meaning

If you play safe or play it safe, you are being careful and do not want to take any risks.

Examples

- 1 I think you should have your car looked at by a mechanic before your big road trip. Better to play it safe than end up stuck in the middle of nowhere.
- 2 I know all these locks seem unnecessary but I believe it's always better to play it safe.
- 3 Remember, when you are swimming, it's best to play it safe and not go too far from the shore.

Cross somebody's path

Meaning

To meet someone by chance or unexpectedly.

Examples

- 1 It's so nice to meet you in this journey of life, I am really so glad **our paths crossed**.
- 2 She **crossed my path** in the summer of 2016 for the first time and we soon decided to form a partnership.
- 3 As a young singer and globetrotter, she **crossed paths with** a French producer in Paris at a party, and he offered her a record contract which she accepted happily.

Out of place

Meaning

If someone feels out of place or is out of place, they feel uncomfortable in a particular situation or place, as if they do not belong there.

Not in the correct or proper place.

Examples

- 1 I see that some of the books in upper left shelve are out of place. Please put them in right order.
- 2 He felt kind of out of place there because of not wearing polished shoes, smart pants and a designer shirt.
- 3 Daniel was the only bachelor among all the married couples at a party and he felt quite out of place.

Talk of the town

Meaning

A person or thing that a lot of people (in a town, city, etc.) are talking about in an eager or excited way.

Examples

- 1 The programme reached almost one million viewers (internet & TV) and was the talk of the town after its broadcast.
- 2 The modern sculpture outside the new library has become the talk of the town.
- 3 These days, the 5G network has become the talk of the town, it's a next generation of cellular technology with download speeds that are 10 to 100 times faster than 4G LTE networks.

Mend one's ways

Meaning

To improve the way you behave after you have been behaving badly for a long time.

Examples

- 1 God forgives us unconditionally when we mend our ways and begin to follow His Will.
- 2 It took Steve a long time to mend his ways, but these days he is a good father and husband.
- 3 The teenager who was expelled from Marlborough College for consistently poor behaviour promised yesterday that he would work harder and mend his ways if he were allowed to return.

Mend one's fences

Meaning

To improve or repair a relationship with someone who you have offended or argued with, or to re-establish friendly relations (with someone).

Examples

- 1 After a bitter argument with her sister, Alice decided to mend her fences by buying her sister some beautiful presents.
- 2 Natalia is someone who is always willing to set her differences aside and mend her fences with whomever she has had issues with.
- 3 The government is doing its best to mend fences with neighboring countries and restore its image on the international stage.

Live/be in a world of your own/live in your own little world

Meaning

A person who seems to spend a lot of time thinking or imagining things, and does not seem to notice what is happening around them.

Examples

- 1 Michelle seemed to be in her own little world as she worked her magic on her Piano. She often had her eyes closed.
- 2 Toddlers tend to live in their own little world, and they rarely listen to their parents or anyone else minding them.
- 3 He is a painter and decorator and seems to be living in his own world most of the time. He seems not to understand young people and rarely utters a word.

A house of cards

Meaning^{vii}

If you describe a system, organization, or plan as a house of cards, you mean that it is likely to fail or collapse.

Examples

- 1 A false man, who did not earn his place where he is, is like a house of cards that can collapse at any time.
- 2 Sometimes, a single failure can bring the entire plan down like a house of cards.
- 3 The peace agreement between the two countries proved to be a house of cards and it fell apart after a couple of weeks.

Apple pie order

Meaning^{viii}

If a room or a place is in apple pie order, it is very neat and tidy, and everything is where it should be.

Examples

- 1 Laura likes to keep things neat and clean, and like a good secretary, she keeps all the records of the office in apple pie order.
- 2 My living room is clean and simple, it's not luxurious, but very pleasing. It is well maintained and all the things are arranged in apple pie order.
- 3 She has got a beautiful house with living room, a terrace, a garden, and 4 bedrooms including one on the ground floor, moreover, she keeps it very neat and arrange everything in apple pie order.

Take/live each day as it comes

Meaning

To deal with or manage things as they happen, and not to make plans beforehand or to worry about the future.

Examples

- 1 I don't worry about being prepared for every possible scenario— I just take each day as it comes.
- 2 There's no way to know what the future will bring, so just take each day as it comes and hope for the best.
- 3 What God wants of you, my dear fellow, is that you should live each day as it comes, like a bird in the trees, without worrying about tomorrow.

Jump to conclusions

Meaning

To form an opinion or come to a conclusion about something before knowing all the facts.

Examples

- 1 I advise you to try to understand what really is going on, rather than jumping to hasty conclusions, so that at the end of the day you don't have to regret what you did earlier.
- 2 Many people, without carefully observing and studying God's ways, jump to conclusions, which are often not in accordance with the spirit of divine truth.
- 3 We shouldn't jump to conclusions quickly, when it comes to judging people, and form an opinion about them without due consideration of the actual facts.

As pure as the driven snow

Meaning

To be completely virtuous or innocent; having no moral flaws.

Examples

- 1 Malena is as pure as the driven snow. She is very innocent and never abuses or cheats on her partners or harm people.
- 2 Even if all his decisions are as pure as the driven snow, his way of implementing them is totally lacking the grace that is needed.
- 3 When we all come into this world, we start out life as pure and clean as the wind driven snow. Each of us are as pure as an Angel of Heaven.

Fish in troubled/muddy waters

Meaning

To involve yourself in a difficult situation, or someone else's problems especially with a view to gain an advantage.

Examples

- 1 During the war, his company had been quietly fishing in troubled waters by selling electronic communication systems to both sides.
- 2 As the homes were being evacuated in the light of the hurricane warning, some burglars were keen on fishing in troubled waters by breaking into houses.
- 3 When the police disorganized after the collapse of communism in eastern Europe, many criminal formations expanded drastically and they started to fish in troubled waters.

Put someone in his or (her) place

Meaning

To tell or show someone that they are not as important, respected, influential, etc. as they think they are.

Examples

- 1 I find him so meddlesome that I think it's good if I sometime **put him back in his place** - with gentle humour and irony, of course.
- 2 One of my class-fellows suggested, "If that bully show up here today in a suit and walk around making a big deal of himself, we would **put him in his place** right away.
- 3 He is getting out of line, and being rude to other class-fellows, he's getting above himself, I think, we need to **put him in his place** as soon as possible.

With a view to (doing) something

Meaning

With the hope, aim, or intention of doing something.

Examples

- 1 They bought the building with a view to converting it into holiday homes.
- 2 They've torn down the old buildings with a view to renovating the whole neighborhood.
- 3 He's painting and decorating the house with a view to selling it for a good price.
- 4 He is studying English with a view to becoming an English professor.

That's the way the ball bounces/that's how the ball bounces

Meaning^{ix}

That's the way things happen; that's fate. Things don't always turn out the way we hope.

We can't control the way things are going to happen or expect them to happen in a certain way.

Examples

- 1 I waited in line for two hours to buy the new video game, but by the time I got inside the store, they were sold out. That's the way the ball bounces.
- 2 I was planning to have fun on my vacation, but I've been sick the whole time. I know it is unfair but that's the way the cookie crumbles.
- 3 He thought they were going to get married and spend the rest of their lives together. Last week, however, she left him for another man. That's the way the ball bounces.

Stop and smell the roses/ take time and smell the roses

Meaning^x

To relax; to take time out of your busy schedule to enjoy or appreciate the beauty of life.

Examples

- 1 It's important to take time out once in a while to enjoy the fruits of one's labours, **smell the roses** and enjoy.
- 2 Well, you've been working nonstop for eight hours to complete that assignment, it's nice that you're finally getting a chance to **stop and smell the roses**.
- 3 If we have enough food on the table, and gainful employment, then we should be thankful to God, and **take time to smell the roses** and enjoy the precious moments of our lives.

Let bygones be bygones

Meaning

If two people let bygones be bygones, they decide to forget about unpleasant things that have happened between them in the past.

Examples

- 1 I know we've had many misunderstandings over the past few years, but I think it's time we **let bygones be bygones** and move on to the more important things.
- 2 I am really sorry for what happened last week, can't we **let bygones be bygones** and try to turn over a new leaf?
- 3 Eric: Why don't you want to invite Ellen to your party? Jane: She was rude to me at the office party. Eric: But that was six months ago. **Let bygones be bygones.**

Walk the talk

Meaning

Do what you talk about doing; practice what you preach.

Examples

- 1 I think most of people talk one way and live another. There are a few people who truly **walk the talk**, be amongst those few.
- 2 Make your life a masterpiece, join the ranks of those people who live what they teach, who **walk their talk**, and take the next step in their journey.
- 3 If you care what others think of you, want to be happier and make others happier, then you should always try to **walk your talk**.

Look who is talking/you're a fine one to talk

Meaning

Used to tell someone they should not criticize someone else's behaviour because their own behaviour is just as bad.

Examples

- 1 Jessica: You've certainly gotten heavy recently. You should go on a diet. Clara: You think I'm fat!? **Look who's talking!** You must be at least 100 kg!
- 2 Sara: "Kathy never pays attention in class." Kate: "**you're a fine one to talk!** Just today I saw you reading a magazine during the lecture."
- 3 Dad: "Son, I'm sick and tired of you coming home late at night and smelling of smoke. You should smoke less and come home earlier." Mom: (to Dad) - "**Look who's talking!** You only got here thirty minutes before him, and I smelled smoke on your breath!".

As free as a bird/as free as the air

Meaning

If someone is as free as a bird or as free as the air, they are completely free and have no worries or troubles.

Examples

- 1 I like to watch children playing on the beach during the summer, they look to be as free as the air and seem to be enjoying their independence.
- 2 Paragliding is a wonderful sport; flying as free as a bird in the air, enjoying the peace and tranquility.
- 3 Now that she's got divorce from her quarrelsome husband, she feels as free as a bird.

Without a second thought/not give something a second thought

Meaning

If you do something without a second thought, you do it without first considering if you should do it or not.

Examples

- 1 When I asked to borrow some money, she gave me £100 without a second thought.
- 2 When my friend offered me to accompany her on vacation to Amsterdam, I accepted her offer without a second thought.
- 3 When we were kids, we never gave a second thought to whether this food or that was good for us—we tried to eat what tasted good, and tried to avoid what tasted bad.

Like the sound of (one's) own voice/be too fond of one's own voice

Meaning

To like talking a lot or too much, usually without wanting to listen to other people.

Examples

- 1 I know you like the sound of your own voice, but can I please say something now?
- 2 My God, you are too fond of your own voice, will you be quiet for a moment and listen to what I've to say.
- 3 Carolina just loves the sound of her own voice — She made a toast at dinner last night and spent 20 minutes talking about herself.

Mind your manners/tongue/language

Meaning

If you tell someone, (especially a child) to mind their manners, mind their tongue, or mind their language, you are telling them to speak or behave properly and politely.

Examples

- 1 Make sure you mind your manners while you are with your Aunt Josephine. I don't want to hear about you giving her any trouble while I'm away.
- 2 Mind your tongue young man! I don't care how you speak at home, that's not how we talk here.
- 3 You'd better mind your language when you're with the manager if
- 4 you don't want to get into any trouble.

Put words into someone's mouth

Meaning

To claim that someone has said a particular thing, although they have not said it, or they did not mean what you say they meant.

Examples

- 1 Why are you putting words into my mouth, I didn't say at all that you were stupid, I just said it was a stupid thing to get off the bus while it was moving.
- 2 You're putting words in my mouth. I didn't say the whole house was dirty, I just said the living room needed a clean.
- 3 You're putting words into my mouth- I didn't say you looked fat in the photo, I merely said you looked a bit chubby.

Take/find pleasure in doing something

Meaning

To enjoy doing something very much.

Examples

- 1 I take great pleasure in doing outdoor activities, like hiking, cycling, riding a horse, rowing a boat and fishing.
- 2 I like winter, I take great pleasure in sitting by fire, reading a book, sipping hot soup, eating nuts, wearing cozy dresses and having long night sleep.
- 3 I find pleasure in swimming, walking on the beach, breathing in the salty smell of the sea and listening to the sound of waves.

The light of someone's life

Meaning

A person someone loves very much and who makes him or her happy.

Examples

- 1 She is - and always has been the light of my life, and I feel so fortunate to have been graced by her love these past 10 years.
- 2 Jacob is the only child of Magdalena, he is the joy, the pride and the light of her life.
- 3 She has been the light of my life ever since I first met her 10 years ago today.
- 4 My mother is my inspiration, the light of my life, the real reason my faith in God is still holding on.

(Only) comes with experience, practice, age etc.

Meaning

We use this phrase to state that something exists or develops as a result of something.

Examples

- 1 I think, the acceptance, patience and humility are something which perhaps **only come with** age.
- 2 Remember, the better judgement of the position and distance of a vehicle while driving on the road **only comes with** practice and experience.
- 3 Trust is important in love and it **only comes with** caring, giving, loyalty, and friendly communications.
- 4 You know, the significant improvements in aiming **only come with** practice and experience, not just observing the other the shooters.

Morning, noon and night

Meaning

All the time; we use this phrase to emphasize that something happens a lot or continuously.

Examples

- 1 The monsoon season has started here, and it has been raining morning, noon and night in my city since Monday.
- 2 You've been playing video games morning, noon, and night. I think you should take a break to do some homework.
- 3 We've been working morning, noon, and night to get this construction project done on time.

Drop someone a line or few lines/drop someone a note

Meaning

To write (someone) a brief note or message, this phrase uses line in the sense of "a few words in writing".

Examples

- 1 I really do like hearing from you, so keep in touch and drop me a line and let me know how you are.
- 2 I wish you've a safe trip to Spain, Magdalena, I'd be very glad if you would drop me a few lines as soon as you get there.
- 3 If you have any comments, suggestions or ideas please drop us a note in the contact section.
- 4 Having reached Switzerland, on a wonderful holiday, she thought to drop a few lines to her friends.

Without (any) further ado

Meaning

Without waiting any longer; with no more delay, or without wasting more time.

Examples

- 1 Well, gentlemen, now as we're settled upon the terms of the agreement, let's sign the contract without any further ado.
- 2 Without further ado, allow me to introduce to you a young man whose integrity, zeal, and sense of morality knows no bounds.
- 3 Ladies and gentlemen, now, without further ado, it's time for a performance of music to be enjoyed by all of us.

At your earliest convenience

Meaning

As soon as it is possible for you; at a time convenient for you.

Examples

- 1 Ms. Emilia, please give me information concerning postgraduate studies in Spanish as a foreign language at your earliest convenience.
- 2 Dear customer, we've acquired a new collection of Chinese vases and crystal chandeliers, please visit our shop at your earliest convenience to see our newest items.
- 3 If you want to work with me, drop by my office at your earliest convenience, we'll sit down, have a talk and work out a plan agreeable to both of us.

Take something the wrong way

Meaning

To misunderstand or misinterpret something, especially in such a way as to get offended by what's said or written.

Examples

- 1 Make sure not to give too much attention to any female guest at the party as they can take it the wrong way.
- 2 Be careful when you're talking to teenagers as they can be very sensitive and take things the wrong way easily.
- 3 I think, we have to be careful while making comments online, because sometimes even if we're joking, people might take it the wrong way.

It takes (a lot of) guts to

Meaning

If something takes guts, it requires courage in the face of danger or difficult situation, so one must be brave enough to do it.

Examples

- 1 It takes a lot of guts to go skydiving. It's really scary. I don't feel to be so brave to go for it.
- 2 It takes a lot of guts for firemen to enter a burning building to save the life of someone.
- 3 Bull riding and wild horse race are no joke, it takes a lot of guts to take part in such big adventures.

To live in a fool's paradise

Meaning

To live in an imaginary world, and believe some things to be true while they're not; a state of satisfaction or happiness based on false beliefs or hopes.

Examples

- 1 If you think a Facebook page alone will get you new customers, you're **living in a fool's paradise**. Get your business a modern design website with a digital marketing strategy along with manual customer support.
- 2 If you think, you can rise to the challenge of staying away from social media for 20 days and spend your time on something else in real life, you're **living in a fool's paradise**, it's not easy for an internet addict like you to do so.
- 3 If you think writing complex sentences can impress the reader, you are **living in a fool's paradise**. Fancy vocabulary and extremely long sentences are hard to understand, so use basic vocabulary and simple sentences that are easy to understand.

Live the dream

Meaning

To have a lifestyle or way of life that is perceived as wonderful, ideal or successful.

Examples

- 1 In so many ways, he's living the dream, having a big mansion in Beverly hills, married to beautiful woman, being a father of lovely kids and running a successful business of real estate in Los Angeles.
- 2 Born in California, raised in Brazil and a resident of the Virgin Islands since 1995, she says she is living the dream as an artist and art gallery owner.
- 3 Steve is lucky enough to have a strong financial support from his father, he studied at best schools, owns a Ferrari and luxury yacht, tours around the globe, he's truly living the dream.

Be your own man/woman/person

Meaning

To act, think, or work independently without being influenced by other people.

Examples

- 1 When I was a teenager, I would do anything my friends were doing, but I am **my own man** now.
- 2 She doesn't allow anybody to tell her how to live her life - she is **her own woman**.
- 3 Set yourself free and never mind what anyone else thinks — Be who you are, honor your true identity, honor your purpose, honor your destiny. Be **your own person** and be great.

Behind the times

Meaning

To be behind the times means be old-fashioned or not modern; not keeping up with current thinking, ideas, trends, methods, technologies, fashion, etc.

Examples

- 1 The rail transport system in my country is way behind the times, our government should make necessary reforms to meet international standards.
- 2 People in some parts of the world tend to be way behind the times when it comes to issues such as women's rights.
- 3 His father is behind the times, he still prefers the clothes from the 80s, wears vintage eyeglasses, and loves other stuff of that era.

A backseat driver

Meaning^{xi}

Someone who gives unwanted advice; someone who tries to run things even though they don't have the power or authority to do so.

Examples

- 1 Could you please stop being such a backseat driver, I don't like anyone telling me what to do every ten minutes.
- 2 I wish I could tell my boss to stop being such a backseat driver, and let me work peacefully.
- 3 Tony is the worst backseat driver I know - I hate driving with him because it makes me so annoyed and nervous at the same time.

Be set or fixed in one's ways

Meaning

If someone is set in their ways, they've been behaving in the same way for many years and don't want to change, in other words, they've fixed habits and ideas which they will not easily change.

Examples

- 1 His grandparents are set in their ways. They won't use technology for their daily routine.
- 2 Although she is set in her ways, and usually doesn't go out often but once a while she breaks her routine to accompany her niece to the theatre.
- 3 Old people are usually more fixed in their ways, and it's harder for them to change. Generally, it seems to grow more difficult to learn new things as the age increases.

A gentleman or lady of leisure

Meaning

A man or woman who does not have to work to earn money and can spend their time doing whatever they want.

Examples

- 1 Lisa is bored of being a lady of leisure for too long, so now she is thinking of opening a coffee shop.
- 2 Mr. Rodrigo used to be a busy man with his textile business, but now he's a wealthy gentleman of leisure with a very large townhouse.
- 3 Lamar is a gentleman of leisure who has no need to work, instead he keeps himself occupied by playing video games, using Facebook and hanging out with lazy friends.

Hold/harbour/bear a grudge against somebody

Meaning

A feeling of anger or dislike towards somebody because of something bad they have done to you in the past.

Examples

- 1 In case of having intense arguments, breakup of relationships, or quarrels, people sometimes **hold grudges against** each other for years.
- 2 She's been **harbouring a grudge against** him ever since he deliberately snubbed her at the party, she was deeply offended by it and looking for ways to avenge her insult.
- 3 Get yourself too busy with catching the blessings that you can't find the time to **bear the grudges against** anyone.

The chances are/ it's very likely that

Meaning

Used for saying that something is fairly likely to happen but is not certain.

Examples

- 1 It's already 09:30 a.m. and Steve has not arrived in the office yet, the chances are he's missed his usual bus.
- 2 Bring an umbrella with you while coming to work because the chances are it's going to rain today.
- 3 It's very likely that the fares of bus, taxi and railroad transportation are going to rise as a result of recent increase in oil prices.

Change for the better/worse

Meaning

A change that makes the situation better or worse.

Examples

- 1 Lisa's life has changed for the better since she moved from Pittsburgh to Los Angeles four months ago.
- 2 Most people think that country's foreign policy has changed for the better since the new prime minister assumed his office in 2018.
- 3 Ever since his divorce, he's suffering from depression and drinking a lot, which is definitely a change for the worse.

Be dying for something/to do something

Meaning

To have a strong desire to do or have something; be extremely eager and excited to have or do something.

Examples

- 1 It's been a year since Layla was together with her elder sister who studies in the United States, her sister is coming home next week for holidays, so Leyla is dying to meet her.
- 2 My friend Natasha lives in Russian city of Yakutsk, where it's always cold, she told me that she's dying for sunny weather.
- 3 After working non-stop for a week to complete the design of farm house in Alpine valley, I was dying for a day off so I could stay home and do nothing.

Welcome/receive someone or something with open arms

Meaning

If you welcome someone or something with open arms, you're extremely happy and pleased to see someone or eager to accept an idea, plan etc.

Examples

- 1 The Mexican people are well-known for welcoming guests with open arms, friendly smiles and showing generosity.
- 2 Family are the people who embrace us with open arms no matter what. We may have our differences, but nothing's more important than family.
- 3 We welcome our government's strict policy on reducing the usage of plastic bags with open arms aimed at actively protecting the environment.

A play on words

Meaning

A clever or funny use of a word that has more than one meaning or that sounds like another word.

Examples

- 1 The phrase, "the cross-eyed teacher lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils" is a play on words, it has two meanings.
- 2 He said, "I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough", it was a clever play on words, (the informal meaning of dough is "Money").
- 3 A play on words is one of the biggest challenges for an interpreter, as it's not easy to translate humor, sarcasm or jokes into another language because it's a cultural thing and therefore it may lose its meaning or may prove offensive.

Keep up with the times/change or move with the times

Meaning

To change your ideas, attitudes, or way of living in the same way as the rest of the society changes.

Examples

- 1 If the resort owners want to keep attracting tourists from around the globe, they need to **keep up with the times** and provide the visitors with all the modern facilities.
- 2 Most of the people believe that the Royal Family has failed to **move with the times** and lagging behind in both legal and practical terms.
- 3 The world is moving on, so we need to **change with the times**, and break all the negative stereotypes and some customary practices in our society.

In one piece

Meaning

If someone or something is in one piece especially after a dangerous journey or experience, they are safe and not damaged or injured.

Examples

- 1 While playing cricket in the street yesterday evening, the kids in my neighborhood hit the ball and it ran into my window pane making a loud sound, but fortunately the pane of glass was still in one piece.
- 2 Franklin was taking snaps of bride and bridegroom with his mobile camera at a wedding ceremony when he accidentally dropped his phone on the ground, but he was glad to see that it was still in one piece.
- 3 "Please slow down!" Susan told the driver. "I want to reach home in one piece!"

Give someone a tough/hard time

Meaning

To deliberately tease someone or make a situation difficult and unpleasant for somebody.

Examples

- 1 He was detained at the airport yesterday for questioning by the US immigration department, they **gave him a hard time** as his name resembled the name of a person who was not permitted to enter the country.
- 2 Would you please stop **giving Cathy a tough time** for not getting good grades in the exams? She's very sensitive about it and doesn't like it when you tease her.
- 3 One of my colleagues **gave me a hard time** when I first started working there, but gradually we started getting along well, and now we're such good friends.

Make a fuss

Meaning

To create a needless commotion or disturbance by complaining, arguing, etc. (about something).

Examples

- 1 While I was waiting in the queue at a fast food restaurant, I saw a woman who received the wrong order, at this she became furious and started yelling at the staff working there, **making a fuss** all because of a simple mistake.
- 2 The admin told a grumpy member, "If you're not happy about something in the group, please leave quietly, there's no need to express anger and **make a big fuss** about it.
- 3 I was travelling in a metro, when suddenly a group of boys started singing out loud, a lady who was seated next to me got upset, so she started taunting the boys severely and **made a big fuss** over it.

Runs in the family

Meaning

If a quality, ability, disease, etc. runs in the family, many members of the family have it.

Examples

- 1 He told me that he is diabetic, this is the disease that runs in his family, now his sister has it, too.
- 2 The culinary arts run in her family, she also has followed her elder sister into the culinary profession, now she is a great food writer and hosts a popular cooking program on TV channel.
- 3 His father and grandfather are both tall, well-built and have blue eyes. He and his siblings have blue eyes too, it runs in his family.

Have a soft corner/spot for someone or something

Meaning

To have a feeling of liking, caring, or affection for someone or something often without knowing why.

Examples

- 1 Johnson always **has had a soft corner** in his heart for his aunt Martha. She was so kind to him as a child.
- 2 She never liked Lasagna before she came to Italy, but now she **has a soft spot** for it.
- 3 Malena was a very bright student and most teachers in her school **had a soft corner** for her.
- 4 Margaret can't see a stray cat without taking it home. She **has a real soft spot** for them.

Enough is enough

Meaning

We say it if we think someone should stop doing something because they've done it too many times already, or because they've been doing it for too long, and now we can't tolerate it anymore.

Examples

- 1 Arthur's roommate hadn't paid his share of the rent for three months, so he said, "Enough is enough, Ben! Either find some money for the rent or move out. I can't afford to support you any longer."
- 2 Now keep your mouth shut and stop asking so many questions, let me eat my dinner in peace. You should know when enough is enough.
- 3 Clark asked his teacher for the third extension of the deadline to submit his essay, but he said, "I am sorry, Clark, but enough is enough. It's due this Friday, and that's it."

Stand out from the crowd

Meaning

To be very noticeable and different among a group of people or things that are all very similar.

Example

- 1 If you want to stand out from the crowd, give people a reason not to forget you- but in a good way.
- 2 George simply finds it boring to walk around like everybody else does. He finds it really great to stand out from the crowd and do something special.
- 3 No matter what class you're from - uptown or downtown - when you're in the sports ground everyone's equal, and it's how you choose to present yourself that makes you stand out from the crowd.

Put something into perspective

Meaning

To compare something with other similar things to get a better, clearer and reasonable view of something.

Examples

- 1 When Leo put things into perspective, he realized that his English was not as good as Irene's English, even though he had been studying it for more time than her.
- 2 Let's put the cost of living into perspective; it costs more to live now than in the past, but now we have a better life than before.
- 3 The use of metaphor, simile and figurative language is not only a good way to put things into perspective, but metaphors are easier to remember than a complex set of interactions.

Keep oneself to oneself

Meaning

If someone keeps himself to himself, it means, he doesn't like to talk to other people much, and avoids the company of others, or he likes to be reserved or aloof.

Examples

- 1 My friend Tina is different from all my friends, she's not only pretty, she's smart and hard-working girl, but she likes to keep herself to herself.
- 2 Lisa used to be very shy and kept herself to herself, and didn't have many friends until she moved to college.
- 3 Clay's teacher described him as very shy, quiet and soft-spoken guy, who liked to keep himself to himself, and was not completely at ease in social gatherings.

Melt one's heart

Meaning

To soften someone's feelings and make them kinder, more loving and sympathetic.

Examples

- 1 He was going to refuse the proposal of kids to take them out for a drive, but **his heart melted** when he saw the innocent faces of little kids, so he said, "Come on young fellows, let's eat out and have some fun together."
- 2 Loraine's sweet little daughter gave her a gift card for her birthday, she wrote, "You're the best mommy in the world, I love you so much", it **melted her heart**, she hugged her with love and said, "Thank you my little angel."
- 3 It **melted my heart** when my best friend sent me a gift on "New Year's Eve" with a note of best wishes and a list of things she loves about me.

Let sleeping dogs lie/don't stir up the hornet's nest

Meaning

Avoid interfering in a situation that is currently causing no problems but it's likely to do as a result of such interference.

Examples

- 1 Avoid asking Rosie personal questions on marriage or family plans, she's very sensitive to such topics, so you had better let sleeping dogs lie.
- 2 You should be careful this time and avoid bringing up any touchy topic during the meeting, and let sleeping dogs lie.
- 3 Articles on controversial topics are edited a lot, and carefully censored because they can cause much controversy among the communities, so the editors think it better to not stir up the hornet's nest.

It goes without saying

Meaning

We use this expression when we want to say that something is so obvious, self-evident or understandable that it doesn't need to be said or explained.

Examples

- 1 I believe that gender equality issues are important and it absolutely goes without saying that men and women should be treated equally under all circumstances.
- 2 It goes without saying that bank is a place where our money is relatively safer than hidden in our home or office safe.
- 3 It goes without saying that eye contact is a type of body language that's very important during communication or conversation.

With no strings attached

Meaning

If an offer, help or relationship has no strings attached, it means, it has no unpleasant conditions, obligations or restrictions which must be accepted as a part of it; in other words, doing something for someone without asking anything in return.

Examples

- 1 Mr. Roger's friend offered him a loan of \$ 50,000 with no strings attached during the time of financial crisis, so that he could survive in the business of trading, it was really a friendly offer for which he is extremely grateful to him.
- 2 She won an 8-day trip to England with no strings attached, including free international flights and Thames River Cruise in a draw called "Win a trip to England" that was organized by a travel agency this Friday.
- 3 He's bought a piece of land to build a school for poor kids, it's a selfless project to provide free education to kids in the village, which is absolutely non-political, having no expectation, and with no strings attached.

With somebody or something in mind

Meaning

If you do something with a particular thing in mind, you do it with that thing as your aim or as the reason or basis for your action.

Examples

- 1 Lamborghini car is designed with driver's comfort, safety and enthusiasm in mind, featuring unmistakable elegance of design, high performance and smooth ride with its surprisingly distinct engine sound.
- 2 The school playground with landscaped garden has been built with children in mind, offering them not only a good environment, but also lots of fun and a great experience.
- 3 Having the interests of students of tourism in mind, our tourism department has made positive developments in vocational training programs for the students and employees of the tourism sector to improve service quality, but there's still room for improvement.

Get/stand in the way of someone or something

Meaning

To get or stand in the way of something means to make it difficult to happen, continue, or be appreciated properly.

Examples

- 1 The only thing **standing in your way** is your own attitude. You can accomplish so much if you have a more positive mindset.
- 2 The massive corruption and heavy burden of debt from international financial institutions **get in the way** of the fight against poverty, illiteracy and disease in my country.
- 3 Social media addiction is one of the main reasons why students don't pay much attention to studies these days. There's a lot of time-consuming activities that **get in the way of** students in focusing their mind on studies.

All jokes/ joking or kidding aside/apart

Meaning

Said when you want people to realize you are speaking seriously, after you have been saying something that was intended to be funny.

Examples

- 1 We have two parts of brain, 'left' and 'right'. In the left side, there's nothing right. In the right side, there's nothing left. All jokes aside, I was reading about human brain yesterday, it is really divided into two parts and it weighs in at three pounds, on average.
- 2 I changed my password to "incorrect". So, whenever I forget what it is the computer will say "Your password is incorrect". All joking apart, thank you very much for helping me organize the party yesterday.
- 3 You know, team work is very important; it helps you to put the blame on someone else. All kidding aside, thanks for coming, having you guys here is like an early feast day present.

A breath of fresh air

Meaning^{xii}

Someone or something that is pleasantly new, different from what you are used to, refreshing, exciting, and makes you feel great.

Examples

- 1 Upon arriving in St. Petersburg, Michelle said: "I am finally in my favorite city in Russia. After living in London for more than 4 years, it feels like a breath of fresh air to be here."
- 2 After working as an English teacher in China for 2 years, Ralph has returned to his homeland Jamaica, it's like a breath of fresh air for him.
- 3 Clara felt that the educational programmes and teaching methods in the UK were like a breath of fresh air after what she had been used to in Spain.

When it rains, it pours

Meaning^{xiii}

It means when one bad thing happens, a lot of other bad things happen at the same time. Similarly, it can also be used in a positive context.

Examples

- 1 The shopkeeper said, “Yesterday, we had almost no customer, but today, it's getting too hard to handle all, really **when it rains, it pours.**”
- 2 I headed towards the ATM for a quick \$200, so that I could buy myself a warm coat. But it was out of order. So, I went to another one, where the line outside was too long, therefore I drove to the next ATM. I swiped the card and found that it was running out of cash. Gosh, **when it rains, it pours**, I guess.
- 3 After months of looking for a job, he suddenly has 4 job interviews this week. **When it rains, it pours.**

The epitome of something

Meaning

If you say that a person or thing is the epitome of something, you're emphasizing that they are the best possible example of a particular type of person or thing.

Examples

- 1 The children are the epitome of innocence, purity and sweetness. They evoke the feeling of love for one and all, and share their innocence, curiosity and happiness in our world without any discrimination.
- 2 The lotus flower is the epitome of serenity, beauty and purity. It's one of the most significant flowers in the Chinese culture. It's depicted in Chinese art, poetry and architecture.
- 3 The diamonds are considered as the epitome of beauty, elegance and glamour.

It's safe to say that / it can be said with confidence

Meaning

Used for saying that you're certain of something to happen, or something is very likely to be true or happen.

Examples

- 1 Seeing her talent for tennis at this early age, I think, **it's safe to say that** she is going to grow up to be a big tennis star one day.
- 2 Based on her grades, **it can be said with confidence** that Cortana will be able to graduate with flying colors.
- 3 It's up to you whatever time of the month you choose to go, but **it's safe to say that** the amusement parks get particularly more crowded on weekends and generally a bit less crowded during the week.

Leave something to somebody's imagination

Meaning

To deliberately not describe or show a part of something because you think someone can guess or imagine it.

Examples

- 1 A good writer doesn't tell the reader everything directly but leaves some things to the readers imagination. Because he knows, as human beings we love to think, dream, wonder, create and imagine.
- 2 I am not going to tell you all the details of the story of my relationship, but we first met last year in an art gallery in Paris, that's where our story began, I'll leave the rest to your imagination.
- 3 The best photographs leave some things to our imagination, they leave us wondering and thinking, it's the same with a good book or an engaging movie or a compelling poem.

Have a high opinion of oneself/ Get above oneself

Meaning

If someone has a high opinion of themselves or gets above themselves, they think or act as if they are better or more important than they really are.

Examples

- 1 She's strikingly genuine and never has a high opinion of herself - even though she spends most of her days interviewing celebrities, globe-trotting and taking part in fashion shows and all.
- 2 Lee is getting a bit above himself. He's only been working with us for one month, and he's already trying to bossing workers around here at workplace.
- 3 You're certainly getting above yourself these days. We work as a team here, and believe that everybody is important. You're attempting to take personal credit for what has been the excellent efforts of the entire team.

It happens to the best of us

Meaning

We use this saying to console someone when something bad happens to them, which means, bad or unfortunate things happen to everyone, even to the best people, so don't feel sad or worry too much about it.

Examples

- 1 Chill out my friend, don't let a negative comment on Facebook from a stranger ruin your day, it happens to the best of us.
- 2 "I went to the market today, and there I lost my wallet with money in it this afternoon, so I went back to look for it, but couldn't find it."
"Don't worry, my friend, it happens to the best of us."
- 3 "I forgot to brush my teeth this morning while coming to office, so I am not feeling so good". "Take it easy man, it happens to the best of us."

Hold someone or something in high regard/esteem

Meaning

To admire or respect someone or something very much.

Examples

- 1 Mr. Ricardo is the supporter of liberty and equality of his fellow citizens in the country and holds cultural diversity in high regard.
- 2 I hold my professor in high esteem for being a good writer, a philosopher and a man of principles.
- 3 I hold Cynthia in high regard for being a compassionate, open-hearted and honest person.

A blessing in disguise

Meaning

Something that seems to be bad or unlucky at first but later you realize that it was the best thing that could have happened.

Examples

- 1 In fact, failure is often our greatest teacher, a blessing in disguise. It shows us what our strengths and weakness are while motivating us to overcome our shortcomings.
- 2 Sometimes, you wish you never met certain people, then you grow and realize that they were a blessing in disguise and contributed to making you the person you are.
- 3 Her cousin was supposed to be in the Twin Towers in New York on September 11, 2001 for a job interview, but he didn't get the call back. He was so upset he didn't get the job, but it was definitely a blessing in disguise.

Live a double life

Meaning

If someone is living a double life, they're having two completely separate and very different way of life, one of which they don't want others to know about and they appear to be a different person in each.

Examples

- 1 Mr. Clinton is keeping his family in dark and living a double life, he pretends to visit the other city for business purposes, while on the contrary, he has a second home and another wife with two kids in Las Vegas.
- 2 It's not only the spies who live a double life, but we do the same to cover up our unbelievable secrets from people nearest us.
- 3 With the use of the internet, it's become easier for people to live a double life, perhaps a person who snaps himself at VIP parties, at fine dining events and on luxury travel adventures, is not as glamorous as he appears.

It's not rocket science

Meaning

We say it in order to emphasize that something isn't very complicated or difficult to do or understand, or it doesn't require extra ordinary skill or intelligence.

Examples

- 1 Freddie's car needed an oil change, but he had no idea how to do it himself. "Don't worry, I'll show you how it's done; **it's not rocket science**," his friend told him.
- 2 "Look, **it's not rocket science**," said Sam to his dad. "You just need to tap and hold the microphone icon to send a voice message through WhatsApp."
- 3 Replacing a car tyre **isn't exactly rocket science**, you can do it yourself without anyone's help.

Two wrongs don't make a right

Meaning

Said to emphasize that we shouldn't do wrong to a person who's done wrong to us, even if we think that person deserves it. Because responding to a wrongdoing with an equally wrong behavior will not make things better in any way, rather it will make things even worse.

Examples

- 1 Just because he made some negative remarks about you, doesn't mean, you should start spreading malicious rumors about him. - two wrongs don't make a right.
- 2 Bill: I would teach Fred a lesson, after he made fun of me in front of everyone at lunch. Jane: You shouldn't do it; two wrongs don't make a right.
- 3 I know he provoked your anger by criticizing you unfairly but you should have stayed calm, instead of hitting him. Believe me "two wrongs don't make a right.

Pull yourself together/get a grip on yourself

Meaning

We say it to someone who is upset, angry or going through a stressful situation, which means, make an effort to control your emotions, and behave more calmly.

Examples

- 1 Lisa: I've been feeling pretty bad about myself since I failed the exam.
Annie: Calm down, you've got to pull yourself together! It happens to all of us at some point. You can do better next time, just figure out your weak points and work on them.
- 2 You're getting all hysterical over nothing. It was a little gunfire, that's nothing to get upset about. 'It'll all be over soon. So, take it easy, and get a grip on yourself.
- 3 I know you're nervous and feeling alone because it's your first time away from home country, but you have to get a grip on yourself, you'll start to feel good over time.

Be/rest/hang in the balance

Meaning

If the future of something or someone, or the result of something, is/hangs in the balance, it is uncertain, nobody knows what will happen.

Examples

- 1 The lives of a large number of people are **hanging in the balance** as the result of the latest outbreak of Coronavirus in China.
- 2 Following the recent unrest in India over the new citizenship law, the jobs of many people are **hanging in the balance**.
- 3 Owing to the Syrian civil war, the future of Syrian people, and peace and stability in the region as a whole are **resting in the balance**.

Cast/shed/throw light on/upon something

Meaning

To throw light on something means, to reveal information or details about something to make it easier to understand.

Examples

- 1 Could you please throw some light on the meaning of the phrase, “You can't wake a person who is pretending to be asleep.”
- 2 My friend sent me an informational video that shed light on the dangers of environmental change.
- 3 This chart of human body casts light on how the network of internal organs is organized.

Too good to be true

Meaning

If you say that something seems too good to be true, you're suspicious of it because it seems so good that you can't believe that such a situation is possible, and you think there may something wrong with it.

Examples

- 1 Cesar: I've found an apartment on west 12th street in New York city comprising 3 bedrooms only for \$1000! Alex: That sounds too good to be true, I'm afraid you heard the wrong price.
- 2 When one of my colleagues told me about some methods of losing 4 pounds weight in a month, I didn't believe it, because I felt it was too good to be true.
- 3 The best defense against Internet fraud is common sense, if an offer seems too good to be true, then it is, so when shopping online, be very careful about revealing your credit card number and shipping address.

Have/got the feeling that..

Meaning

To feel that something is true although you have no direct knowledge or facts about it.

Examples

- 1 Niko: Hi, my friends call me Niki, nice to meet you. Craig: Likewise, I've the feeling that we've met somewhere before.
- 2 I don't know why but I have the feeling that the year 2020 is going to be better than previous one for me.
- 3 I've the feeling that this fitness program is going to work very well for you. Why don't you give it a try?

Variety is the spice of life!

Meaning

Said to emphasize that doing many different things, or often changing what you do, or the presence of variety of things in our life is what makes it more interesting, enjoyable and worthwhile.

Examples

- 1 That town has good leisure complexes with a choice of swimming pools, restaurants, children's playgrounds and tennis courts nestled among colorful gardens- because they believe that variety is the spice of life!
- 2 We're all different in some ways, having different cultures, interests, languages and goals in life, I think that's the beauty of life, indeed, variety is the spice of life!
- 3 Some people want a fixed routine so that they don't have to adapt to new circumstances over and over again, while others think variety is the spice of life!

It takes all sorts/kinds to make a world

Meaning

We say this to emphasize that people have different characters, opinions, preferences and abilities, and we should accept it rather than condemning them for being different.

Examples

- 1 Not everyone will behave in the way you expect them to. After all, it takes all sorts to make a world.
- 2 'I don't understand Bill. He spends nearly all weekend playing snooker game in a billiard club.' Well, it takes all sorts to make a world.'
- 3 'I am unable to understand why some teenagers these days have purple hair, nose rings and so many tattoos on their bodies.' Well, it takes all kinds to make a world.

Music to one's ears

Meaning

If something that you hear is music to your ears, it makes you feel very happy, such as good news.

Examples

- 1 We had to arrive at the airport six hours before the flight time, so after waiting for hours there, it was music to our ears to finally hear the boarding announcement.
- 2 I returned home hungry in the evening and as I opened the door, the rich aroma of freshly baked bread greeted me, and the noise of saucepans from the kitchen was like music to my ears.
- 3 After a long day at work, I walked along the coast for a while, and heard the sound of waves gently lapping on the soft sand, it was like music to my ears.

A henpecked husband

Meaning

A man who is controlled by his wife, and always ready to submit to her orders, and is afraid to disagree with her.

Examples

- 1 A man who asks his wife's permission before taking any action except breathing is called a henpecked husband.
- 2 Jacques is tired of his father being a henpecked husband, who never dares to contradict his wife.
- 3 Greg is the stereotypical "nice guy", who married into his wife's family and have been a henpecked husband for 10 years.

Do something like there's no tomorrow

Meaning

To do something desperately, excessively or wildly as if there won't be another opportunity.

Examples

- 1 Mathew has bought a new Ferrari, and he is driving to all the attractive places in the city like there's no tomorrow.
- 2 Meet my friend Jerry, he swims like a fish, runs like he's being chased by wolves, eats like a starving peasant and lives like there's no tomorrow.
- 3 We all have got our own sad stories, let it go. Have fun, no regrets, and live life like there's no tomorrow and love like it's all that we know.

Be high/low on your list (of something)

Meaning

If something is high or low on your list of something, you consider it very important or not very important.

Examples

- 1 If I was going to visit a European city, Rome would be high on my list of priorities.
- 2 I was fresh out of the graduation and starting a new career. At that point of my life, getting married was low on my list of concerns.
- 3 After completing his education at Oxford, working as a philosophy teacher was high on his list of professions.

Leave something to somebody

Meaning

To allow somebody to take care of something, or to give someone responsibility for dealing with something.

Examples

- 1 Eric: I am busy with wedding arrangements; I need someone to get my guest when he arrives from the airport. John: **Leave it to me**, I'll pick him up.
- 2 Carlos: I need to find someone who can fix my back fence. Davin: **Leave it to me!** I've already got all the tools and materials I'll need.
- 3 Kevin: I am having trouble setting up my internet. Clark: **Leave it to me**, I am pretty good with these sorts of things.

You haven't lived (if/until ...)

Meaning

If you tell someone that they haven't lived until they experience a particular thing, you are telling them that thing is extremely good and should be experienced.

Examples

- 1 You've not truly lived if you've never had a driving experience along the Pacific Coast Highway, California.
- 2 You haven't lived until you've done something for someone who cannot pay you back.
- 3 You've not lived until you've taken the hot air balloon ride in Cappadocia, Turkey, it's amazing to view the unique rock formations, valleys and vineyards by a gentle, free-floating balloon flight.

Do something out of love/kindness/respect etc

Meaning

We use 'out of' to tell what feeling or reason causes us to do something. For instance, if we do something out of anger, we do it because we're angry.

Examples

- 1 Monica saw an injured cat in the street, so she took her to the nearest vet **out of kindness**, where the cat was treated and then transported to the local animal shelter.
- 2 In our family, my parents manage the house by love, care and attention, as a result, we the children also obey them **out of gratitude**.
- 3 In the Japanese societies, it's a common practice that people give up their seats for those who are older than them **out of respect** in a crowded public transport.

Have something against somebody/something

Meaning

If you have something against someone or something, you dislike or disapprove of them, especially for a particular reason.

Examples

- 1 I don't have anything against any religion as a concept. I think, there're many great values that we can take from all religions.
- 2 I don't have anything against any language in general, but I think, English is an extraordinary language.
- 3 I have nothing against him personally, but to be honest, I wouldn't want him as mayor of our city.

To be well put together

Meaning

In a basic sense, a person who looks clean, groomed and dresses well. In other words, they take care of their appearance.

Examples

- 1 Rodrigo is the good guy. A young, handsome, very well put together and educated Portuguese man.
- 2 Our teacher Anna is a well put together person and known for her inspiring teaching techniques, generating enthusiasm and self-belief in her students.
- 3 Well, I'm not saying it just because she's your friend but Deniz is well put together girl. She's beautiful and has good sense of fashion and style.

A left-handed/backhanded compliment

Meaning

A remark that appears to be a compliment or praise but could also be an insult or criticism. In other words, it's an insulting or negative remark disguised as praise.

Examples

- 1 Leo: "I am happy that despite being a woman, you drive the car so good. (It implies that he doesn't believe a woman can be a good driver, so it's a back-handed compliment as it expresses praise and criticism at the same time).
- 2 She said, "That haircut makes you look years younger." What a backhanded compliment, as if I looked really old before.
- 3 When she is talking, I make sure it goes in one ear and out the other, because everything she says is either a left-handed compliment or a front-handed insult.

Put someone at ease

Meaning

To make someone feel calm, comfortable and relaxed.

Examples

- 1 The doctor put the anxious mother at ease by giving the positive medical report on her baby's oral health.
- 2 My friend was a little nervous before his first horse race, so I told a few jokes to put him at ease and raise his spirits.
- 3 Jennifer always welcomes her guests warmly, and put them at ease by being friendly, kind and informal.

Raise/lift somebody's spirits

Meaning

If something lifts/raises your spirits or mood, it makes you feel happier, more cheerful and hopeful.

Examples

- 1 After a busy day at work, relaxing and enjoying evening tea whilst listening to the piano in a cosy atmosphere really **raised my spirits**.
- 2 The kind words we speak are powerful, healing and pleasing, they can **lift someone's spirits** and often land as soft and gentle on ears as a butterfly.
- 3 After a long, chilly winter, nothing **lifts my spirits** like the first signs of spring.

To let someone down

Meaning

To make someone disappointed by not doing something that they are expecting you to do.

Examples

- 1 As a daughter, Claudia never let her parents down, because she believes that she owes a lot to her parents, that's why she does whatever she is able to do for her parents.
- 2 You have let Jene down more than once, and I don't think she'll ever trust you again.
- 3 The difficult times are the times for us to become stronger by having full faith in God that He will never let us down.

Icing/frosting on the cake

Meaning^{xiv}

If you describe something as the icing/frosting on the cake, you mean that it makes a good thing even better, but it is not essential.

Examples

- 1 The meal was already very delicious in the restaurant, the wonderful view from the panoramic terrace was the icing on the cake.
- 2 I was already having a pretty good day, the frosting on the cake came when one of my friends sent me some hilarious video clips, it was real fun to watch them.
- 3 "It was an overwhelming joy to win the scholarship," explained the student. "To celebrate it with my own friends and family was the icing on the cake."

The devil is in the details

Meaning

Used for saying that something may seem simple on the surface, but there can be hidden complications in the details that can cause problems.

Examples

- 1 Don't be easily convinced by ads about the dream of making a large money online. It's not easy and most people never succeed at it. You realize it once you get into it, that's why it's said that the devil is usually in the details.
- 2 When learning English as a second language, some people see rich vocabulary and grammar rules essential to be good at it, but it's important to pay attention to pronunciation too. Because the devil is in the details.
- 3 If you really want to convince me, you need to be more specific. I want to know everything in detail before I make a final decision, because the devil is in the details.

Turn (or put) back the clock

Meaning

To wish to return to an earlier period, because you think it was a very good time or because you would like the chance to live your life differently.

To go back to the way things were done in the past instead of doing things in a modern way.

Examples

- 1 If I could turn back the clock, I would love to live more in the moment rather than worrying about the future.
- 2 The aim of the designer was to turn back the clock in terms of costume and appearance to give the model a vintage glamour touch.
- 3 Many people in his country want to turn back the clock and return to the days of socialism when a strong central government promised personal and economic security.

A word to the wise (is enough)

Meaning

You just have to give a hint to wise people to make them understand something, they don't need you to explain everything in great detail for them.

Examples

- 1 I recommend that you should change the way you look at life, if you really want her to like you, a word to the wise is enough.
- 2 A word to the wise is enough, stay away from getting into controversial topics on social sites, it can create useless confrontation with others.
- 3 If she's pulling away from you, take a step back to reflect instead of giving a quick response. A word to the wise is enough.

Drop someone/something like a hot potato/brick

Meaning

To quickly stop being involved with someone or something because you stop liking that person or thing or you think they will cause problems for you.

Examples

- 1 Martin has had a couple of friends who dropped him like a hot potato when he was going through depressive phases in his life.
- 2 When a group of young tourists learned about the coronavirus making its way to Italy, they dropped their tour plan like a hot potato.
- 3 She dropped Ted Like a hot brick when the affair allegations against him turned out to be true.

Up in the air

Meaning

If a decision, issue or plan is up in the air, it has not been decided, settled or arranged yet.

Examples

- 1 His plan to go back to Lebanon and open a restaurant there is up in the air, as he is still unable to meet the required budget.
- 2 Our plans for the trip to Athens are still up in the air but I'll let you know what we decide in case you want to join us.
- 3 His decision to study abroad is still up in the air, as he wants to improve his English before going to any foreign country.

The evening of life

Meaning

A polite way to describe someone's old age.

Examples

- 1 In the evening of his life, he was an honored figure among the Greeks, and his daily walk made him a familiar sight in the city of Athens.
- 2 Surprisingly, even being in the evening of his life, my father has retained tremendous physical shape.
- 3 When we are in the evening of life, we require more time to learn new things.

Call a spade a spade

Meaning

To speak plainly, directly and truthfully about something, even if the truth contains criticisms, bad news, or is unpleasant to hear.

Examples

- 1 In civilized countries, the censorship is not very strict, and people are free to call a spade a spade and speak out loud about what they feel.
- 2 If the media authorities want to remain credible, they need to call a spade a spade, even if that may be embarrassing.
- 3 Let's call a spade a spade, "Nobody is always busy, if they care, they will make time for you. It's just a matter of priorities."

Be in someone's good books

Meaning

If you're in someone's good books, they've a good opinion about you and are pleased with you.

Examples

- 1 Mother Teresa is in my good books, because of her noble virtues and selfless service to humanity.
- 2 Rebeca is in her parents' good books, because of her achievements at the Cambridge over the past two years.
- 3 Ever since I helped her son get into university, I've been in Jane's good books and she's been very nice to me.

Throw someone off balance

Meaning

To confuse or upset someone for a short time by saying or doing something that they are not expecting.

Examples

- 1 Abigail still remembers how Davin and other professors **threw her off-balance** with tricky questions during the interview in 2008 for a position of an instructor in linguistics department.
- 2 When Ms. Lizette watched the scenes of a massive fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on T.V, it **threw her completely off balance**, and it took her a couple of days to come out of this shock.
- 3 Wellness and good health are extremely important to Serena, so when she found out that she had genetic mutation, it **threw her completely off balance**.

Be in someone's DNA

Meaning

If a quality or characteristic is in someone's DNA, it is an important part of their nature or identity.

Examples

- 1 Poetry is in Jessica's DNA, she knows how to put her feelings into words in an artistic way. She can describe a particular feeling in a dozen different ways.
- 2 Travelling is in Melissa's DNA, she can't stop exploring the world. So, she is always on the move.
- 3 Like Tennis, fishing is in his DNA, as he spent plenty of time on the water with his friends and family growing up in a small fishing village in Mexico.

Play (one's) cards right/well

Meaning

To use your resources in the right way, so that you are successful in getting what you want.

Examples

- 1 You can make a fair amount of money from Freelance writing, if you play your cards well.
- 2 If you play your cards right, you can earn a substantial profit by flipping houses. (The term "house flipping" is used to describe the process of buying, rehabbing, and selling properties for profit.)
- 3 Wisdom, knowledge and experience are what allow us to play our cards well, so we lead the best lives possible.

To be out of one's element

Meaning

To be uncomfortable or unhappy in a certain situation or place, typically because you're not used to it.

Examples

- 1 Lisa has never been to a tattoo parlour before, so when she had to accompany her friend to the parlour, she was a bit out of her element.
- 2 My friend is very shy around women, so he feels out of his element at a party, at a bar, or other places where he might meet women.
- 3 She feels out of her element if she ever has to leave the house without wearing the make-up.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder

Meaning

Everyone has a different view of what or who is beautiful, if a certain thing is beautiful to us, it may not be appealing to another person.

Examples

- 1 In many parts of Asia, fair skin is considered to be more beautiful than dark, while many Caucasians go to tanning salons to darken their skin. Well, everyone has a different definition of what's beautiful, as the old saying goes, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder."
- 2 What does "An ideal physique" look like? Well, it depends on who you ask, as they say "beauty is in the eye of beholder"
- 3 Don't be too much self-conscious about your skin tone, you're beautiful the way you're. Remember, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder."

A fair-weather friend

Meaning

Someone who only wants to be your friend when things are going well for you and leaves you when you're having problems.

Examples

- 1 A real friend is always there to help, in both times of triumph and crisis. However, there're some friends who're only there in fortunate circumstances, make sure you keep such fair-weather friends at a distance.
- 2 Most people are "fair weather friends". As long as things are going well and the sun is shining, they are your friends.
- 3 We live in a society that likes to kick people when they're down. Don't be a fair-weather friend. Stick with people. They need you more in the tough times than they do in the good times. (Joel Osteen)

In your own good time

Meaning

If you do something in your own god time, you do it when you're ready to do it, rather than when other people want you to.

Examples

- 1 Listen, it's not for you to tell me when to take a stand on my issues, all right? I do stuff **in my own good time**, when I want to and how I want to.
- 2 I have promised to send you the pictures of our trip, but I'll do it **in my own good time**.
- 3 I've sent you an email with a custom link to download the guide to study in Australia, but I don't want to rush you, please read it **in your own good time**.

One's kind of person/thing/place etc.

Meaning

The type of person, thing, place etc. that someone usually likes.

Examples

- 1 The Monal restaurant in Margalla hills is **my kind of place**, it's away from traffic and hustle and bustle of city life.
- 2 Rainy day is **Lisa's kind of weather**, she tends to sleep longer, enjoy staying at home and reading books with a cup of warm drink.
- 3 Monica is **my kind of star**, she's not only a good actress and model, she also has a very impressive personality.

Stand on ceremony

Meaning

To behave in a formal way.

Examples

- 1 The hostess said, "Please don't stand on ceremony, help yourself to more food on the table."
- 2 Please make yourself at home, there's no need to stand on ceremony in our home.
- 3 We're friends, not strangers, so you must not stand on ceremony with me, or I'll find you extremely boring.

A wet blanket

Meaning^{xv}

A person or thing that spoils or ruins other people's fun.

Examples

- 1 Coronavirus outbreak has thrown a wet blanket on the lives of people, and is creating a distance among them.
- 2 She had a runny nose, and was feeling unwell, so she decided to skip the party, because she didn't want to be a wet blanket on such a happy occasion.
- 3 Don't invite Nicole to the party. She's such a wet blanket that she always has something negative to say.

Turn one's back on someone/something

Meaning

To refuse to help, support, or be involved with someone or something.

Examples

- 1 Family is the most precious gift we've in this life. If we turn our back on them, we truly have nothing.
- 2 You should never turn your back on those who were there in your times of need.
- 3 We should never turn our back on reality, we can't escape it, so we must learn to face it.

Keep someone in the dark

Meaning

If you keep someone in the dark, you deliberately not tell them details about something.

Examples

- 1 The doctors sometimes keep the patient in the dark and don't tell the whole truth, because they fear that the patient may lose hope.
- 2 He keeps his wife in the dark about his finances, because she spends too extravagantly on shopping.
- 3 Don't keep your divorce lawyer in the dark, he needs to have all the details, so that he can make a good preparation of your case.

To take your time

Meaning

We use this expression to let someone politely know that there's no need to hurry. In other words, we say it when we don't want the other person to feel pressure about time, so that they can use as much time as they need to do something.

Examples

- 1 I know you're very busy nowadays, so don't worry about responding to my message right away, just **take your time** in writing me, I would love to hear from you whenever you're free.
- 2 There's no need to hurry, just **take your time**, and ensure that you make the right choice with three jobs on offer.
- 3 I want to take you out for dinner tonight, so **take your time** in picking a nice restaurant according to your taste and let me know.

On the one hand, on the other hand

Meaning

We use it when we're comparing two different facts or two opposite ways of thinking about a situation.

Examples

- 1 On the one hand, smokers should have the right to smoke if they want to, but on the other hand non-smokers should have the right to breathe smoke-free air.
- 2 On the one hand, I love the freedom of being single, but on the other hand, the idea of being married and having a family is very attractive.
- 3 Our national health officials are advising against gatherings of 10 or more people to control the coronavirus, but we can still leave our homes. Italy, on the other hand, is on complete lockdown, citizens need to get written permission from the government to leave their homes.

A win-win situation/solution/deal etc.

Meaning

A win-win situation or result is one that is good or beneficial for everyone who is involved.

Examples

- 1 A good Agri-environment scheme is a 'win-win' situation for the farmer, environment, and society as a whole.
- 2 In today's world of education, online learning is most likely the biggest revolution, and in many ways, online courses are win-win for both students and course creators alike.
- 3 Three new bills aiming to transform school education in our province, are win-win for everyone; teachers, students and their parents.

God moves in mysterious ways

Meaning

It means that God's intentions are not always clear, His plan is beyond human understanding. He has a reason for everything, however strange it may seem to us.

Examples

- 1 The global pandemic coronavirus is undoubtedly the worst nightmare and has shaken the world, but at the same time, it's proving to be good for our planet, we don't know when it will end, but we believe that God moves in mysterious ways.
- 2 God moves in mysterious ways, even if we may not always understand why He allows certain things to happen to us, we can know He is able to bring good out of evil, and triumph out of suffering.
- 3 We shouldn't lose heart because of the difficulties we face, God moves in mysterious ways, He often hides His blessing in trouble or trial.

The glass is half empty or half full

Meaning

Used for referring to an attitude to look at things in a positive or a negative way. If you say the glass is half empty, you see the world in a negative, or pessimistic way. If you say the glass is half full, you have a more optimistic viewpoint.

Examples

- 1 There's always two ways of looking at any situation. We can either focus on the bad or choose to see the good. As they say, a glass can be half empty or half full at the same time, it depends on how we look at it.
- 2 I generally try to live my life seeing the glass half-full rather than half-empty. But sometimes, it's hard to find a silver lining in the dark clouds.
- 3 People with a positive attitude tend to see the glass half-full and be thankful, while those with a negative attitude see the glass half-empty and complain about it.

That's the least I could do/can do

Meaning

A polite answer to someone who thanks you, usually when you feel you should do more to help. In other words, you feel what you've done for someone is only the minimum of what they deserve.

Examples

- 1 No need to thank us—the flowers are the least we could do to thank you for your generous hospitality this past week.
- 2 **Lorene**: "Thanks for bringing medical supplies for me, I am too nervous to leave home because of the lockdown. **Luke**: "You're welcome. It's the least I could do for my elderly neighbour.
- 3 Our parents have contributed a lot in our lives, the least we can do is, never do anything that can upset them.

Strike up a friendship/conversation etc. (with someone)

Meaning

To create or establish a relationship or conversation with someone in an informal way.

Examples

- 1 It's not easy to strike a random conversation with an introvert, although they're often very intelligent, interesting and lovely people that can make excellent friends.
- 2 In many ways, striking up friendships with people of other nationalities can open our mind and introduce us to new ideas and points of view, and we feel connected to the world as a whole, not just our own country.
- 3 Although Ray has many female friends, but he doesn't want to strike up a dating relationship with any of them, he's just interested in keeping friendship ties.

To age like a fine wine

Meaning

If someone is aging like a fine wine, they're improving with age, they become more attractive, wiser or finer, just like a good wine gets better with age.

Examples

- 1 It's in your hands to take care of your health and age like a fine wine or neglect it, and degenerate into a weaker, unattractive and more vulnerable version of yourself.
- 2 November 26 is the 41st birthday of my friend, and she doesn't look a day over 30 and neither does her figure. She's really aging like a fine wine.
- 3 The actor is certainly aging like a fine wine and the ladies can't help but go into a frenzy over how handsome, charismatic and well-groomed he is.

A rolling stone

Meaning

A person who often changes jobs, relationships or moves to different places; one who leads wandering or unsettled life.

Examples

- 1 It's no secret that most of the celebrities are sort of rolling stones, they don't stay in one relationship for long.
- 2 Being a travel vlogger, he has to travel through different countries, and live like a rolling stone.
- 3 Kevin can't stick with one job for more than a few months, he acts like a rolling stone who constantly moves to new roles without having a sensible reason.

To kill the conversation

Meaning

To say or do something either purposely or unintentionally that ends a conversation with someone.

Examples

- 1 It's hard to talk with someone who's mostly giving us one or two-word replies, such short messages **kill the flow and vibe of the conversation.**
- 2 When someone is talking to you, stop playing with your smart phone. This is a disrespectful attitude that can **kill the conversation.**
- 3 It's true that we always want to get our point across and have our voices heard. However, it's not good to get overexcited about any topic and start interrupting others, because it shows disregard for others and can **kill the conversation.**

To class up a room, place, ambience etc.

Meaning

To add a touch of elegance, grace, style etc.; to make something have class, or make it classy; to improve the quality, tone, or status of something.

Examples

- 1 The new carpet and white curtains with pink flower patterns and green leaves have really **classed up this dining room.**
- 2 Thanks for coming to my birthday party and sharing this special occasion with me, your presence has really **classed up this place.**
- 3 The antique furnishings, fine marbles and wooden coffee tables really **class up the ambience of this hotel.**

Have a screw loose

Meaning

If you say that someone has a screw loose, you mean that they behave in a strange way and seem slightly mentally ill.

Examples

- 1 I don't know if it's a result of a trauma or if you're just born that way, but I'm sure that you've got some screws loose in that head of yours.
- 2 I think he's got a screw loose; he takes bath with socks on and often irons the currency notes and wants every dollar bill as smooth and flat as the day it was printed.
- 3 We know that his way of behaving is strange, he's the only president who has got many screws loose in his head. Need I say more?

You can't eat your cake and have it too or you can't have it both ways

Meaning

You can't simultaneously retain your cake and eat it". Once the cake is eaten, it's gone. Similarly, you can't get advantage from two opposite situations or things, you have to make a choice between two things even though you would like to have both.

Examples

- 1 You can't have it both ways – Either you take healthy diet and stay fit or eat junk food and get fat.
- 2 You can't eat your cake and have it too, either you spend too much time together and ruin your relationship or give the other person his/her personal space and keep the spark going in your relation.
- 3 If you're never ready to make any compromise with your spouse, you can't expect your marriage to work well. You can't have it both ways.

To chase rainbows

Meaning^{xvi}

If someone chases rainbows, they try to get something they can never have, or they pursue unrealistic goals that they're unlikely to be able to achieve.

Examples

- 1 If you want to live a happy life, then don't set goals that are too big for you to achieve, it's like chasing rainbows. There's nothing wrong with wanting the best from life, but setting bar too high for ourselves can leave us feeling disappointed.
- 2 If you expect your website to go viral within a few days and receive a plenty of takeaway orders after a few weeks, you are sadly chasing rainbows. It can happen, but the odds are pretty low.
- 3 To make a woman admit she's wrong is like chasing rainbows, because they're always right.

You can't teach an old dog new tricks

Meaning^{xvii}

It means that it's often difficult to teach someone a new way of doing things if that person has been doing things his or her own way for a long time and is not prepared to try new ways.

Examples

- 1 Nowadays, it takes one tiny device to carry our personal library anywhere, thanks to the invention of e-books. I tried to convince my uncle to switch to this method, but he doesn't like the idea and still prefers printed books. Well, you can't teach an old dog new tricks.
- 2 It's an old saying that you can't teach an old dog new tricks, but I wonder if we can teach old tricks to a new dog?
- 3 Kim's doctor told him not to eat starchy food anymore, but he still has potatoes with every meal. I guess you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

To steal a glance/look

Meaning

To look quickly at someone or something, hoping that nobody notices you doing so; look at someone or something secretly.

Examples

- 1 On my way to work one morning, I saw a charming girl in the train. So, I just stole some glances at her and smiled to myself, marveling at her porcelain skin, curve of her cheek and glossy eyes until she stepped off the train at king's cross.
- 2 Brian acts as if he doesn't care about Jennifer's presence whenever they're together in the class, but she caught him stealing a look at her a couple of times.
- 3 There's nothing more beautiful than a moment when you steal a glance at someone you like, and find him/her stealing a glance back at you at the same time.

To go to extremes/carry or take something to extremes

Meaning

If someone does something to extremes, they do it to a point beyond what is normal or acceptable; behave in a way that's not reasonable or normal.

Examples

- 1 I think, we should never go to extremes in efforts to justify our point of view and be rude to others who disagree with us.
- 2 There're many in this world who're trapped between two worlds—excess and deprivation. Well, moderation is the best course and the key to happy and balanced life; so, there's no need to carry things to extremes.
- 3 As the coronavirus spreads across the world, many people are going to extremes and stockpiling grocery items, toilet papers and other essentials, temporarily leaving markets empty over the fear of shortage.

Life is full of surprises

Meaning

It means it's difficult to predict what life has for us in store, we never know what we're going to get.

Examples

- 1 Before coronavirus struck the world, who would have thought it would be politically acceptable to shut a country down. Well, **life is full of surprises**, you never know what is coming next.
- 2 **Life is full of surprises**, not all these surprises are pleasant, some can be devastating. So, we need to be ready for what life brings us.
- 3 **Life is full of surprises**, it's not like a movie that we can fast forward and see how the things will play out. We never know or expect what destiny has decided for us, but it's up to us what we choose to do with what comes our way.

To verbalize your feelings, thoughts, ideas etc.

Meaning

To express ideas, opinions, or emotions in words, especially by speaking out loud.

Examples

- 1 Weather we verbalize our prayer and say it aloud or pray in silence, I believe, God can hear our thoughts just as easily as He can hear our words, He knows all about us and knows what's going on inside us, both good and bad.
- 2 Shy people are often hesitant to verbalize their feelings.
- 3 Young children deal with many of the same emotions as adults do. But they often find it hard to verbalize their feelings.

To be wise beyond one's years

Meaning

If someone is wise beyond his years, he is smarter than he should be for his age; or he's more intelligent than other people of his age.

Examples

- 1 The Greek philosopher and logician Socrates was an important influence on ancient philosophy who believed in speaking the truth. He was an individual who was humble, wise beyond his years and lived only to spread knowledge.
- 2 Natalie is such a wonderful human being. So kind, thoughtful, and wise beyond her years. I've known her for years and am proud to call her my friend.
- 3 Mariana always loves to be around people who are inspiring, Knowledgeable and wise, especially people who are wise beyond their years.

A moaning minnie

Meaning

A person who is never satisfied and is always complaining.

Examples

- 1 We all complain, it's part of the human experience. But we shouldn't be a moaning minnie, people who are always negative, they attract more negative in their lives.
- 2 It's true that no one likes to be around someone who always acts like a moaning minnie. However, sometimes it's necessary to let out our frustrations about the things that bother us. Expressing ourselves is important, but constant complaining is neither good for our mental and physical health — nor for the well-being of others around us.
- 3 Life isn't always fair, it's true, and we still have to deal with it. So instead of being a moaning minnie we should try to find the positive in difficult situations.

Pull at someone's heartstrings

Meaning

If you say that someone or something pulls at your heartstrings, you mean that they cause you to feel strong emotions of love, fondness or sympathy.

Examples

- 1 I adore that Arabic song, it pulls at my heartstrings, its lyrics have been beautifully written, very meaningful, poetic and with so much depth. I find great joy in listening the melody and how the piano elegantly plays while the beat is still going on.
- 2 Ms. Margaret is a well-known writer, she has an excellent, effective and witty writing style that always pulls at my heartstrings.
- 3 Nothing pulls at the heartstrings more than watching the footage of empty streets of different cities around the world in the midst of lockdowns due to Coronavirus.

Absence/distance makes the heart grow fonder

Meaning

It means that when you are far away from someone or something you love, it makes you love that person/thing even more. Because you miss that person and think about them often, and that feeling makes you want to be with them even more.

Examples

- 1 Sometimes the best way to appreciate something is to be without it for a while. Because absence makes the heart grow fonder.
- 2 It's an old saying that absence makes the heart grow fonder but too much distance can make people grow apart.
- 3 **Enza:** Does it bother you that your husband goes away on long business trips?" **Erica:** "No. The time we spend apart turns out to be good for us, it makes us more excited to be united with each other. Indeed, absence makes the heart grow fonder."

To paint/portray/show someone in a bad light
Or to paint a black picture of someone

Meaning

To represent or make someone appear as evil or harmful; to describe or portray someone or something as being extremely bad, hopeless or unpleasant.

Examples

- 1 A number of Facebook pages have been banned recently for spreading anti-religious sentiments and **showing some sects of society in a bad light**.
- 2 Sky News host Chris Kenny says, “the media will do anything they can to **paint Donald Trump in a bad light** and pull out all the tricks they can to avoid reporting him in a good light.”.
- 3 The Russian government has banned two movies from theatrical distribution after reports emerged that they **paint a black picture of the country** and depict the Russians as villains.

It's the thought that counts

Meaning

When giving someone a present or doing a favour for someone, the most important thing is the good or kind intention behind the act than any other consideration.

Examples

- 1 When you're receiving a gift, just keep in mind that it's the thought that counts, no matter what's the size or price of the gift is.
- 2 My dad drew a portrait of me, it wasn't very good, but it's the thought that counts.
- 3 My friend gave me a present on my birthday and my name was slightly spelt wrong, but that's okay, because it's the thought that counts.

Appearances are often deceptive

Meaning

We can't judge a person's character by just looking at their outward appearance.

Examples

- 1 We often judge others by just looking at their physical appearance, but what we see may not be true. Just remember appearances are often deceptive.
- 2 Lina may look fragile but appearances are often deceptive. She is actually a strong, smart and fearless girl.
- 3 If you see Albert Einstein for the first time, he may look like a silly guy to you with messy hair but appearances are often deceptive, he was a genius who was awarded a Nobel prize for his work in the field of physics.

Put/lay your cards on the table

Meaning^{xviii}

If you put/lay your cards on table, you reveal your plans, intentions, opinions, etc. without holding anything back; to be open and honest.

Examples

- 1 Today in the morning, he laid his cards on the table and told me that he would vote for Democratic nominee in upcoming elections.
- 2 Okay, I am putting my cards on the table and let you know that I am going to make acting my major.
- 3 I think it's high time I laid my cards on the table, and tell Erica about my feelings about her.

To rain cats and dogs

Meaning^{xix}

To rain very heavily or steadily.

Examples

- 1 It's been raining cats and dogs for almost 30 minutes and we're all waiting in the cafe entrance for it to stop.
- 2 An umbrella isn't much help when it's raining cats and dogs—you need a hat, boots and a long raincoat too.
- 3 I love staying at home drinking tea and eating snacks when it rains cats and dogs outside.

Pour/throw cold water on something

Meaning

To discourage someone or criticize their plan, idea, or desire to do something so much that they no longer feel excited about it or lose their enthusiasm for it.

Examples

- 1 The spread of coronavirus has **thrown cold water** on the business of tourism and the oil industry on a global scale.
- 2 Their royal highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge had arrived in our city for a 3-day royal tour. Even the wet weather couldn't **pour cold water** on the excitement of thousands of people lined the streets to get a glimpse of the royal couple.
- 3 The COVID-19 pandemic has **thrown cold water** on our government's plans to hold cultural festivals this year.

Owe someone a debt of gratitude/thanks

Meaning

To be extremely thankful or grateful to someone for something they did.

Examples

- 1 Our nation owes a debt of gratitude to the legendary poet, thinker and philosopher, Allama Iqbal for infusing a revolutionary spirit in the youth of the subcontinent during the war of independence.
- 2 We owe a great debt of gratitude to the nurses, doctors and healthcare workers on the frontline in this time of crises for their efforts to save the lives of people affected by coronavirus with humility, bravery and with heroism.
- 3 I owe my parents a huge debt of gratitude for fostering healthy eating habits in me at very young age.

To descend/sink/stoop to someone's level

Meaning

To behave in the same bad way that someone else is behaving.

Examples

- 1 There're plenty of negative, toxic and cheap people out there who'll try to drag you down with their insults, criticisms, and put downs. Never descend to their level, just move on and away from that negativity.
- 2 Don't treat others in the same bad way as they treat you. Be the bigger person. Don't sink to their level. Treat people with respect, love and kindness. Why should we? For a simple reason that what we do will find its way back to us. Somehow, someday.
- 3 When someone is unkind to you, belittles you or try to put you down, remember that their actions speak volumes about their mindset, morals and heart – not yours. So, don't stoop down to their level and stay in character. One way or another, karma will handle it.

Fortune smiles on someone

Meaning

If fortune smiles on you, you are lucky and good things happen to you.

Examples

- 1 I read in the news that a Tennessee woman found some pearls worth thousands of dollars while enjoying a meal of fried oysters. It's very rare to have such a surprise, but it could happen when **fortune smiles on someone**.
- 2 I hear that Jenny just won some major award, so soon after her huge promotion. It seems that **fortune is smiling upon her** at the moment.
- 3 It's very rare to find someone who genuinely cares about you, but sometimes **fortune smiles upon you**, and you find that someone. So, cherish such persons, they're the treasures of your life and a true blessing from God.

Pat someone on the back
Or give someone a pat on the back

Meaning

To praise someone for doing something good.

Examples

- 1 Many parents believe that a pat on the back helps the child to be more positive, boosts their self-esteem and confidence, and gives them a positive energy to move forward in life.
- 2 I think Camila deserves a pat on the back for writing an awesome song as a Mother's Day gift to her Mom.
- 3 I think the telecommunication company in my city deserves a pat on the back for giving rapid response to customers' complaints.

Cut to the chase/come or get to the point

Meaning^{xx}

To talk about or deal with the important parts of a subject and not waste time with things that are less relevant.

Examples

- 1 I wish my economics professor would just cut to the chase and not use so many analogies in the lecture.
- 2 I just need a recipe for barbeque sauce, I don't want to know how it became popular in different regions of the world, so please just cut to the chase and stick to the subject matter.
- 3 Mark, I've no time to waste, why don't you just cut to the chase like a real guy, and tell me in layman's terms, what you actually want from me?

Beat around the bushes

Meaning^{xxi}

To avoid talking about something directly; to spend a long time getting to the main point of what you are saying.

Examples

- 1 I love reading Tracy's articles about international affairs, she doesn't **beat around the bushes** and gives her own opinion about everything in a clear manner.
- 2 I asked you a simple question. Give a straight answer. Don't **beat around the bushes**. You're not a politician!
- 3 Most of the politicians have a habit of **beating around the bushes** but Mr. Kennedy always lays out his views in plain English.

Blow one's own trumpet/horn

Meaning^{xxii}

If someone blows their own trumpet, they talk boastfully about their own qualities, achievements, skills etc. or act in a self-promoting manner.

Examples

- 1 There's no need to **blow your own trumpet** and tell others about your accomplishments. Let others see it themselves. Remember, a great man is known, he needs no introduction.
- 2 Whenever I hear the phrase, "Blow one's own trumpet" the first person that comes to my mind is "Ronald Trunk". He's truly the master of the art of boasting.
- 3 I don't like to **blow my own horn** but whenever I make a promise, I keep it.

To blow hot and cold

Meaning

If someone blows hot and cold, they keep changing their attitude or mind towards something; one minute they're for it, the next they're against it.

Examples

- 1 Alexia kept blowing hot and cold while deciding what to order at dinner. After several minutes of reading the menu, she said, "Um, I'll have the burger; no wait, the pasta seems good, but I had it a few days ago. Okay, then I'll have grilled fish with potatoes or maybe the soup and salad."
- 2 Grazia tends to blow hot and cold when it comes to deciding what to wear on a particular occasion.
- 3 My friend Anne is a very difficult girl. She blows hot and cold with her emotions and is very hard to please.

To feel like a fish out of water

Meaning

If you feel like a fish out of water, you feel uncomfortable because you're in an unusual or unfamiliar situation.

Examples

- 1 Eddie felt like a fish out of water, when his internet connection was lost for a couple of hours.
- 2 I just feel like a fish out of water when people start asking me questions about my personal life.
- 3 Eric felt like a fish out of water when he was stuck in a traffic jam on his way to San Jose from San Francisco airport.

Too many cooks spoil the broth or too many captains will sink the ship

Meaning^{xxiii}

If too many people try to do the same thing at the same time then they're likely to make a mess of it and it will not be done very well.

Examples

- 1 Imran wants to run the Facebook group on his own, and doesn't want to add anyone as an administrator, because he believes that too many cooks can spoil the broth.
- 2 You should hire one professional architect to design your home, there's no need to hire a team of designers, otherwise the project can be a mess, because too many cooks spoil the broth.
- 3 Michael and three of his class-fellows started working on a science project for school. However, it became problematic because everyone had their own way of thinking and how it should be handled. So, it hung in the balance because there were too many cooks in the kitchen.

To set aside differences

Meaning

If people set aside differences, they decide to forget or ignore the differences of opinion, belief, principle or feeling in order to achieve a common goal.

Examples

- 1 Let's set aside our differences and join hands in support of the education reforms in the long-term interests of our country.
- 2 In the overall interests of our country, all the sectors should set aside their differences to build a harmonious, united and stable state.
- 3 On this Independence Day, let's pledge to set aside all our differences and shun hatred to work together for the better future of the people of our country.

Like a bull in a china shop

Meaning^{xxiv}

If someone is like a bull in a china shop, they behave or move in a reckless or clumsy manner in situations that require careful thinking or behavior.

Examples

- 1 The protests over the death of George Floyd in some states of USA have turned violent, with some protesters behaving like a bull in a China shop, destroying storefronts, burning cars and clashing with police.
- 2 After Eddie got drunk, he was behaving like a bull in a China shop, he got into a fight with some guys at bar and wounded a few of them by throwing glass bottles at them.
- 3 The Chinese people on the whole are culturally very subtle planners, and pay careful attention to things, they never act like a bull in a China shop, I think we need to take a leaf out of their books.

A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor or straight roads do not make skillful drivers

Meaning^{xxv}

The easy situations can never improve you or make you better. The harsh conditions of life make a person tougher and more capable.

Examples

- 1 “A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor.” There will always be trials in life and though it may be difficult to endure, it will only make you stronger, wiser and better.
- 2 If your life has always been a bed of roses, you can't claim yourself to be a person with experience, because straight roads don't make skillful drivers.
- 3 A skilled sailor is the one who has witnessed all the obstacles in the sea, yet managed to reach the shore. Likewise, one who has encountered all the hurdles and overcome them is sure to be successful in life in the long run. Because a rough sea makes a skilled sailor.

There's more to someone (or something) than meets the eye

Meaning

We use this phrase to imply that someone or something is more interesting, significant, complicated etc. than they seem to be.

Examples

- 1 Ayaz might seem a little naive and dull guy when you meet him, but **there's more to him than meets the eye**. He's actually a very intelligent man, he writes very good poems, composes songs, and even speaks three different languages.
- 2 Things are not always what they seem to be, **there's always more than meets the eye**. We may think that someone is living a perfect life but in private they may be drowning in darkness.
- 3 There's always so much **more to the story than meets the eye**. People can literally portray a fake life through social media, so don't believe everything you see or read online.

The man/woman/thing of (one's) dreams

Meaning

If you describe someone or something as the person or thing of your dreams, you mean that you consider them to be ideal or perfect and would like to have them.

Examples

- 1 Ever since the day I met Deniz, I've been feeling that she's the girl of my dreams because she has got everything I ever wanted in a girl.
- 2 The famous singer revealed the news in a new Instagram post: "I am very happy to announce to all of you that I am going to marry my soul mate, my true friend and the man of my dreams on the twelfth of next month.
- 3 Lamar is thinking of building a house of his dreams in the south of Spain with a big sunny garden, a swimming pool and a terrace to sit, relax and enjoy the beautiful views of city.

Let the cat out of the bag/spill the beans

Meaning

To reveal a secret accidentally or on purpose.

Examples

- 1 I was really looking forward to seeing that movie, until Natalia **let the cat out of the bag** and told me the ending.
- 2 There's a surprise party for Jane on Wednesday. Please keep it under wraps till hump day and don't **spill the beans**.
- 3 Finally, the film producer **let the cat out of the bag**, and told that Rena will be given the lead role in the play.
- 4 We sometimes **spill the beans** when we're not careful with what we say.

Happy as a clam (at high tide)

Meaning^{xxvi}

If you are happy as a clam at high tide, you are very happy.

Examples

- 1 **Clara:** “What do you enjoy doing in your free time?” **Karim:** “I love watching movies – give me a comfy sofa, a fridge full of drinks, fruits and ice cream and a large plasma TV and I am as happy as a clam at high tide.”
- 2 A fisherman in the Philippines is happy as a clam at high tide after discovering that a mammoth pearl he stashed away for years under his bed is worth a \$100 million. (New York Post)
- 3 The Park was filled with babies, all loafing around and looking as happy as clams at high tide. (The New Yorker)

Sit/stay/remain etc. on the sidelines

Meaning^{xxvii}

If you stay on the sidelines, you're not taking part or getting involved in an activity.

Examples

- 1 Our government can no longer afford to stay on the sidelines and let the country go into a water crisis. We need to build a new dam to overcome the shortage of water and electricity in the years to come.
- 2 The only way to avoid having haters is to sit on the sidelines, do nothing big in life, don't set goals, be average and no one will hate on you.
- 3 You can't remain on the sidelines and read your iPhone and be on social media all the time and expect everything to be cool. You have to be in the field if you want to make progress in life.

A drop in the ocean/bucket

Meaning

A very small amount of something compared to what is needed.

Examples

- 1 Whether we live for forty, eighty or hundred years, our time here on earth is but a small drop in the ocean compared to eternity.
- 2 I know planting 20 trees is just a drop in the ocean in fight against climate change, but ocean would be less because of that missing drop. So, let's be those tiny drops and try to do little efforts for the betterment of our environment.
- 3 The construction of 10,000 houses for the homeless people by the government in 4 years is just a drop in the ocean, there are more than 100,000 people who are already living in camps without basic sanitation, water supply and electricity.

Hand/give/offer someone something on a (silver) plate

Meaning

To allow someone to get something very easily, without having to work for it.

Examples

- 1 We don't get things handed to us on a silver plate in this world, son. We have to really work for them.
- 2 Imran khan has all the advantages of being a rich kid, he has everything given to him on a silver plate.
- 3 We have to earn money, success and glory through hard work, we can't have it handed to us on a silver platter.
- 4 I remember the days when we had to go to the library to get information about different topics. Well, those days are gone. Nowadays, with the advancement of the World Wide Web, almost every kind of information is offered to us on a silver platter on internet.

Be full of beans

Meaning^{xxviii}

If someone is full of beans, they are very lively, energetic and in high spirits.

Examples

- 1 I always enjoy going for a morning walk in Jinnah Squire park. It makes me feel happier, full of beans and ready for the day.
- 2 The children seemed to be full of beans as they prepared to go on vacation to New Hampshire for a couple of weeks.
- 3 Though Marta is in her 50's, she is still full of beans and can play soccer for hours on end.

To settle the score with someone

Meaning^{xxix}

If you settle a score or settle an old score with someone, you take revenge on them for something they have done in the past.

Examples

- 1 The former US National Security Advisor John Bolton has settled the score with Donald Trump by portraying him in a bad light in his latest book, he was fired by Trump last year for disagreeing with some of his suggestions.
- 2 The president has vowed to settle the score with people who incite violence against ethnic minorities in the country.
- 3 The famous boxer was defeated by his opponent very badly in the last match, so he's going to play against him again in the finals to settle the score.
- 4 The man who survived a deadly attack at the hands of his rivals has decided to settle the score with perpetrators of the abuse.

To have nerves of steel

Meaning

If someone has nerves of steel, they do not get nervous or frightened even in very difficult or dangerous situations.

Examples

- 1 If you're going to be an aircraft pilot, you need to have nerves of steel—there's no time to panic in the face of difficult situations.
- 2 Abraham Lincoln was able to take a stand against slavery in the face of strong opposition, because he had faith, courage and nerves of steel.
- 3 It takes nerves of steel to drive on crazy roads like “the pass of Stelvio” in Italy. Driving on highways or normal streets in your area is kids’ stuff compared to it.

To build castles in the air/sky

Meaning

To create plans, dreams or hopes that have very little chance of coming true; to daydream.

Examples

- 1 Your government is building castles in the air by claiming to achieve 5 trillion-dollar economy by the next 5 years. It's not possible for a country that is facing serious economic crisis in such short span of time unless they have a magic wand in their hands.
- 2 If you want to be a part of successful people in the manufacturing industry, you are advised to take rational steps instead of continuing to build castles in the air.
- 3 The Prime Minister built castles in the air by making promises to the people during his election campaign but has done little to show on the ground.

There's no such thing as free lunch

Meaning^{xxx}

Things that are offered for free always have a hidden cost; or if you receive something for free, you'll have to pay for it in some other way.

Examples

- 1 Nowadays many apps are offered to us as "free," but they often come at the cost of collecting our personal data. Have we ever paused for a few seconds to read the terms of agreement before downloading an app? Remember, there's no such thing as free lunch.
- 2 "There's no such thing as a free lunch." Everything comes at a cost which is revealed sooner or later."
- 3 "There's no such thing as free lunch." Although some social sites such as Facebook appear to be free, but we've to pay a higher price for being a part of it in terms of time, energy and intellectual property. They give us free access to their system because it's in their interest that we spend time on their sites and click on the links.

Laughter is the best medicine

Meaning

This idiom suggests that laughter or good humour is beneficial to our health.

Examples

- 1 When it comes to relieving stress, there is nothing that works faster in bringing back mind, body and spirit into balance than a good laugh. As they say, **laughter is the best medicine**.
- 2 I live by the motto "a day without laughter is a day wasted". Because it's very beautiful, joyful and valuable thing in our life. So, let's not let our days go to waste and try to bring some cheer in life, continue to laugh and make others laugh especially during these difficult times, because as we all know, **laughter is the best medicine**.
- 3 They say, "**Laughter is the best medicine**." But, if you're laughing without any reason, you need medicine. 😄

Birds of a feather flock together

Meaning^{xxxi}

It implies that people who have similar interests, ideas, or characteristics tend to spend time with each other.

Examples

- 1 Every evening a group of people get together on the corner of our street to play cards. They all smoke, chill and enjoy each other's company. They remind me of the old saying "birds of a feather flock together".
- 2 I guess Magda and Elena will get along very well, because they both love hiking, woodworking and gardening. As they say, birds of a feather flock together.
- 3 Birds of a feather flock together. The same can be said for Paul, as he is often seen roaming the city with a group of other bikers like him.

To lose respect for someone

Meaning

If you lose respect for someone, you stop respecting them, usually because of their actions, something they said, or something you learn about them.

Examples

- 1 Leo has lost respect for ken for mocking him over his appearance in front of others.
- 2 I've lost respect for one of my colleagues for trying to be right all the time and acting better than everyone else.
- 3 Sandra has lost respect for her husband because he always tries to boss her around like she is some sort of employee.
- 4 I lost respect for him as a political leader after he publicly made some derogatory comments about the immigrants from certain countries.

A bitter pill (to swallow)

Meaning^{xxxii}

A bitter pill to swallow is something unpleasant or hurtful that is difficult to accept but has to be accepted and endured.

Examples

- 1 When Jason realized he was losing his hair and going bald very fast, he became very sad and it was a bitter pill for him to swallow.
- 2 The devastating attacks by locusts' swarms in parts of East Africa, Asia and the Middle East is a bitter pill to swallow for people. They are threatening crops, livelihoods and food supplies of tens of millions.
- 3 The news of another delay in the release of the long-awaited game by naughty dogs was a bitter pill to swallow for the fans.

There are plenty more fish in the sea

Meaning

If you tell someone that there are plenty more fish in the sea, you are comforting them by saying that although their relationship with someone has failed, there are many other people with whom they may have a successful relationship in the future.

Examples

- 1 I am really sorry to hear about your break up with Andy, I understand how it feels, there's no need to lose any sleep over it. You're such an awesome guy; it is her loss for sure. "There are plenty more fish in the sea," I bet you will make someone really happy one day.
- 2 I try to remind myself that there are plenty more fish in the sea but I can't stop thinking about Andrea.
- 3 I am sorry to know that you just have lost your job. Sometimes when things like this happen, it ends up pushing you toward bigger and better things. Don't worry, just have faith and try your best, "there're plenty more fish in the sea," you know.

Straight from the horse's mouth

Meaning^{xxxiii}

If you hear something straight from the horse's mouth, you hear it from the person who has direct personal knowledge of it.

Examples

- 1 I don't listen to rumors because they're often inaccurate—I always try to get the news straight from the horse's mouth whenever I can.
- 2 “How do you know they broke up?” “I heard it straight from the horse's mouth. Right after they had a big fight, Sandy called to let me know what happened.”
- 3 **Ayaan:** There're a lot of speculations that “tik tok” is going to be banned in your country. **Leyla:** Yep, I heard it too, but no such statement has been issued by our government yet. Let's wait for it to come straight from the horse's mouth. It's the only way to know it's true or not.”

Every coin has two sides

Or there are always two sides to every story

Meaning

In every situation, each person has a certain way of looking at it. One person's side of the story could be completely different from the other, even though it is the same situation. So, we should get both sides of a story before making a decision and find the real truth.

Examples

- 1 We're all bad in someone else's story. Before you judge me from their side of the story, take note that there're always two sides to every story.
- 2 Never judge people based on what somebody tells you or what you hear about them. Remember, every coin has two sides.
- 3 There're always two sides to every story, just because you hear one doesn't mean it's the whole truth. After all, people like to portray themselves as victims, and just choose to not mention how they were wrong in a situation so that everyone agrees with them.

Every cloud has a silver lining

Meaning^{xxxiv}

There's always something good even in a situation that seems very bad or difficult.

Examples

- 1 **Every cloud has a silver lining.** Even though our daily lives have been disturbed by the COVID-19, we have become more aware of the importance of taking hygiene measures, maintaining self-discipline, and keeping our surroundings clean.
- 2 Although the coronavirus has turned the world upside down, not everything is really as bad as it seems, it has some positive effects too, a survey by a health group suggests that more than 300,000 Britons have quit smoking owing to Covid-19 fears because it makes them more vulnerable to this disease. **Every cloud has a silver lining.**
- 3 Although COVID-19 has severely affected the airline industry, the air pollution has decreased vastly since the flights were curbed at our national airport. Perhaps, **every cloud has a silver lining.**

To air/wash your dirty laundry in public

Meaning^{xxxv}

If you air your dirty laundry in public, you talk about your personal matters in public or with other people which should probably be kept private.

Examples

- 1 Grazia decided not to take the family dispute to court as she feared it would only lead to a lot of washing of her dirty laundry in public.
- 2 **Interviewer**: “What were the main reasons for divorcing your spouse last month?” **Imran**: “I can’t talk about it, sorry. I don’t like to wash my dirty laundry in public.”
- 3 Ellen kicked her husband really hard under the table when he started to air their dirty laundry in public at brunch.

To take your cue from someone

Meaning

If you take your cue from someone, you use their behavior or actions as a guide to yours own. Or You behave in the same way as someone else, because you think that is the right thing to do.

Examples

- 1 We should take our cue from China and regulate the number of kids every family shall have. In many developing countries, especially in Pakistan, the rapidly growing population is a major cause of most of its problems.
- 2 We should take our cue from Netherland, and make cycling a part of our everyday life. The bicycles are the cheapest mean of transportation. They are also healthier, eco-friendly and quicker than cars in urban areas.
- 3 We should take our cue from kids and learn how to enjoy the little things in life and spend some time with kids and try to see the world through their eyes.

To know someone by sight

Meaning

If you know someone by sight, you can recognize them when you see them, although you have never met them and talked to them.

Examples

- 1 I have never spoken to some of the people living in my street, although we have lived here for years, I just know them by sight.
- 2 Even after studying for 2 years in the same school, there were still some students whom I only knew by sight.
- 3 I just knew her by sight, because she went to the same college as me but I had never spoken to her nor did I know her name.
- 4 Although I've been walking in Jinnah Park in my hometown every morning for the past few years, I have only a few acquaintances there, however, I know a lot of people by sight.

The poor man's something

Meaning

If you describe something as the poor man's something, you mean it's similar to another thing in some ways but it's much cheaper to buy.

Examples

- 1 The Chinese smart phone manufacturing company “Xiaomi” is growing very fast, especially in some poor countries where it is referred as **the poor man's iPhone**. Because it provides high-quality features and specifications at cheapest rates.
- 2 Throughout the world, grain legumes are known as **the poor man's meat** because they are rich in nutrition and low in cost. Therefore, most low-income populations can use this nutritious crop as their staple food.
- 3 While people across much of our country are burning in the scorching heat of summer, some fellows are getting inventive about keeping cool. They've come up with an economical solution for those without air conditioning and invented a small, handy DIY AC that uses only a fan, bucket, and ice to help you chill out, it's seen as **the poor man's air conditioner**.

To have a quick/short/hot temper

Meaning

If someone has a quick/short/hot temper, they become angry easily, often for no good reason.

Examples

- 1 It's common for young kids to get frustrated when things don't go their way. But some kids **have very short temper** and they get angry faster than others.
- 2 The People who **have a quick temper** have to confront with many undesirable consequences in life. It can affect their social, personal and professional life.
- 3 It's no secret that president **has a short temper**, he gets annoyed often when media persons ask him critical questions.

To make (both) ends meet

Meaning^{xxxvi}

If you make both ends meet, you just make enough money to pay for your basic needs.

Examples

- 1 You can't make (both) ends meet living in an expensive city like Los Angeles unless you have a well-paid job.
- 2 The workers complained that on their present wages they could hardly make (both) ends meet, let alone enjoy any luxuries.
- 3 Semih is an 8-year-old boy who has started selling flowers on a footbridge to help his mom make ends meet after she lost her job during the pandemic.

A man/woman of many parts

Meaning

A man or woman who is talented in multiple areas of life. A multi-talented person.

Examples

- 1 Andrea is a woman of many parts: she's a good singer, a talented musician, and a movie director who has made a number of great movies year after year.
- 2 Tyrese Gibson or better known as just Tyrese is a man of many parts. He's a musician, actor, screenwriter and male model. He is widely known for his acting role as Roman Pearce in "The Fast and Furious movie franchise.
- 3 Mr. Shahnawaz was a man of many parts: a great poet, excellent painter and a fluent multilingual/polyglot.

A walking encyclopedia

Meaning

A person who has a vast knowledge on various subjects, topics and concepts.

Examples

- 1 Mr. Zhang Wei is a walking encyclopedia of names, dates and facts regarding the history of China.
- 2 Rafiq is a walking encyclopedia of Turkish food, she has made a name for herself as a food writer by virtue of her in-depth knowledge of Turkish food and its history.
- 3 My grandfather is truly a walking encyclopedia when it comes to describing the history of World War II.

To give something your best shot

Meaning

If you give something your best shot, you do it as **well** as you possibly can.

Examples

- 1 I never do anything half-heartedly, either I **give it my best shot** or I don't do it at all.
- 2 Linda, please don't lose heart, it's okay if you couldn't get that job, at least you **gave it your best shot**.
- 3 The doctor said, "This case is going to be very tough, but I promise I'll **give it my best shot**."
- 4 You know our life will never be perfect, but it can get pretty close to it, so always **give it your best shot**.

To point a finger at somebody

Meaning^{xxxvii}

If you point a finger at someone, you blame them for something bad that happened.

Examples

- 1 Most of the Americans are pointing fingers at Donald Trump for taking too long to respond to coronavirus pandemic.
- 2 It's easy to point fingers at others, but it takes courage to accept your own mistakes and correct yourself.
- 3 Well, I'm not a type of person who likes to point fingers at others... but I think our current manager has contributed a lot to the problems of us employees.

To clean up your act

Meaning

To clean up your act means to improve your behavior and begin acting in a more acceptable way.

Examples

- 1 The admin told a member, “You need to clean up your act and stop disrespecting group’s rules or else you will be bounced from the group.
- 2 My teacher said to me, “If you really want to get into one of the best universities in the UK, you need to clean up your act and get better grades.
- 3 You have to clean up your act, John, and stop turning up late for work every other day if you’re serious about keeping your job.

An apple a day keeps the doctor away

Meaning^{xxxviii}

It means eating an apple each day can help keep you healthy, as a result, you will not need to visit a doctor.

Examples

- 1 My grandfather has a habit of eating an apple the first thing in the morning since he was in high school, because he believes that an apple a day keeps the doctor away.
- 2 Our mother used to advise us to have an apple for a snack, instead of chips, because she knew that an apple a day keeps the doctor away.
- 3 One of my colleagues keeps an apple in his packed lunch every day, and eats it shortly after taking his lunch, because he believes that an apple a day keeps the doctor away.

To sweep (something) under the carpet

Meaning^{xxxix}

To try to hide a problem or something unpleasant or keep it secret instead of dealing with it because it makes you feel embarrassed or ashamed.

Examples

- 1 The Leader of the Opposition said that the actual figures of Covid-19 cases in our country are much higher than the government's report and they're trying to sweep the real statistics under the carpet to hide their inability to deal with it.
- 2 The government is trying to sweep the issues of gender inequality under the carpet instead of taking necessary measures to cope with it.
- 3 The committee is being accused of sweeping financial problems under the carpet to avoid embarrassment.

To take someone's side Or take sides with someone

Meaning

If you take sides or take someone's side in an argument, fight or conflict, you support one person, group or party and not the other.

Examples

- 1 In conflict between KSA and Yemen, our country decided to remain neutral instead of taking sides with any party.
- 2 Tracy said, "My mother always takes my sister's side whenever we argue with each other".
- 3 I think our country should not take sides with China or America in their geopolitical fight.

To count on/upon someone/something

Meaning

If you count on someone or count upon them, you rely on them to support you or help you.

Examples

- 1 I can always count on my friend Anne whenever I need help in preparing an English lesson for my class.
- 2 I was counting on the money from the insurance to buy a new car for myself, after my car was stolen.
- 3 It is always good to know that I can count on my family to be there in difficult times.

The grass is always greener on the other side (of the fence)

Meaning^{xl}

It's said to mean that other people may appear to be in a better situation than you, but in reality, their situation may not be as good as it seems.

Examples

- 1 Some people are never satisfied with their own situation; they always think others have it better. But the reality can be quite different, as they say, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence."
- 2 We humans are never satisfied with what we have, as kids, we want to grow faster because adult life seems more appealing to us, as adults, we want to go back to being kids when life was not so complicated. It is true that the grass is always greener on the other side.
- 3 While seeing photos of your friends on Instagram at various places around the world, enjoying a great life in vibrant global cities, you might find yourself wanting that life, but maybe you don't see the whole picture, life is not all fun there, they've their own problems that you're not aware of. Remember, the grass is always greener on the other side.

To take a fancy to someone

Meaning

If you take a fancy to someone, you start liking them or become romantically attracted to them.

Examples

- 1 My friend Tommy takes a fancy to her co-worker Jane but he is hesitant to make any attempt to express his feelings to her.
- 2 On our way back to the city center, my friend Magdalene took a fancy to a guy who played the guitar on a street corner. By now, she has gone there several times and asked him to play for her.
- 3 I have begun to take a fancy to Emilia. She's a good-natured girl. I like her blond hair, hazel eyes and general cuteness.
- 4 If you take a fancy to a girl, it's normal that you'd naturally feel a desire to see her as often as possible, to be close to her and to talk to her.

Actions speak louder than words

Meaning^{xli}

It is used to emphasize that people's actions reflect their true character rather than what they say. Or people's intentions can be better judged by what they do than by what they say.

Examples

- 1 **Actions speak louder than words**, just because someone says they love you doesn't necessarily mean they really do until they prove it by their actions.
- 2 We can say sorry over and over again but if our actions don't change, the words become meaningless. You know **actions speak louder than words**.
- 3 If a girl is constantly making herself unavailable to see you and the best excuse she comes up with is, "I'm just busy," then it's a clear sign that she doesn't have interest in meeting you, if she really likes you, she'll make time for you – as simple as that. Remember, **actions speak louder than words**.

To blow something out of proportion

Meaning

To make something seem more important, serious, worse etc. than it really is. To exaggerate something or make a big deal out of something.

Examples

- 1 I am sure Tracy didn't mean anything negative by that comment, it was nothing more than a joke—don't blow it out of proportion.
- 2 Every time I make even a small mistake, my colleague magnifies it manifolds, and blows things out of proportion.
- 3 The president claims that a section of media is blowing his remarks about black community out of proportion.

Fall into someone's lap

Meaning

If something desirable falls into your lap, you get it by chance or with having made little or no effort at all.

Examples

- 1 A huge source of income **fell into the lap of Saudi Arabia** when American prospectors discovered oil deposits beneath its desert sands in 1938 and it changed the entire economic situation of the country and paved the way for it to become one of the richest nations in the world.
- 2 Yes, it is true that he is making a huge amount of money by monetizing his YouTube channel, but all this luck has not just **fallen into his lap**, he has been working hard to create great videos for the audience for 3 years.
- 3 I spent six months looking everywhere for a job and couldn't find anything and the week after I stopped looking, a great job suddenly **fell into my lap**.

Once in a blue moon

Meaning^{xlii}

When we say that something happens once in a blue moon, we mean it happens very rarely.

Examples

- 1 Feroz Khan used to go hunting in the woods with his friends on Sundays in his youth, but now he goes only once in a blue moon.
- 2 I am very careful about what I eat so it's only once in a blue moon I eat fast food.
- 3 I go to the cinema once in a blue moon, only when there's a movie I really want to see on big screen.

Where there's a will, there's a way

Meaning^{xliii}

If you truly want to do something, you will find a way to do it.

Examples

- 1 Erica didn't know how to shop online until she needed some books that were only available at an online store, so she learned how to order online from YouTube clips. Where there is a will, there is a way.
- 2 In the beginning, the teacher had no idea how to handle her class of 40 unruly children. She just got on with the job as best as she could. Where there's a will there is a way.
- 3 A few weeks ago, Ronnie didn't know anything about creating a Gmail account, but then she decided to learn it, now creating an account is a piece of cake for her. Indeed, where there is a will, there is a way.

A one-way street

Meaning

If you describe a situation, an agreement, or a relationship as a one-way street, you mean that only one of the two sides/parties is benefitting from it.

Examples

- 1 A healthy relationship is not a one-way street and it takes time to evolve. It's about giving and receiving. No relation can function properly when one party always gives and the other always receives. Therefore friendliness, mutual respect and loyalty must come from both sides.
- 2 The trade between China and the United States has been somewhat a one-way street, with China benefitting more by having a huge trade surplus of more than \$ 500 billion a year.
- 3 Respect is not a one-way street, if you want it, you have to give it. It's as simple as that.

To bark up the wrong tree

Meaning^{xliv}

If you say that someone is barking up the wrong tree, you mean that they're looking for something in the wrong place, or they're doing something in a way that will not give them the result they want, or they have a wrong idea about a person, thing or situation.

Examples

- 1 Look, Tommy, I am not the one who deflated the tyres of your bicycle, you're **barking up the wrong tree** by pointing the finger at me, perhaps it's your mischievous friend Mike who played a prank on you while you were in the class.
- 2 My friend, you're **barking up the wrong tree**, that girl has no interest in you. In my estimation, you don't stand any chance with her, so I suggest you try to find someone else.
- 3 If you think you can achieve success without going through a few tough times, you're **barking up the wrong tree**. It's not how it works. Learn to accept failure, embrace it and think of it as a lesson you needed to be taught to move forward in life.

To flip someone the bird or To give someone the finger

Meaning

If you flip someone the bird, you raise your middle finger while keeping the other fingers folded down, it's a rude gesture to show someone your anger, contempt or extreme displeasure.

Examples

- 1 Jerry flipped the bird to a guy sitting behind him in the movie theater because he was uncomfortable with him for speaking over and over again during the movie.
- 2 The guy in the black Audi looked at Jimmy and gave him the finger, he was angry because Jimmy was honking his car's horn excessively.
- 3 A driver stopped the car little too close to Trever on the crosswalk as he was crossing the road, and he flipped him the bird as a response.
- 4 The boy in blue jeans flipped the bird to a driver who threw a plastic bottle on the pavement through his car window.

To thank one's lucky stars

Meaning

To feel very grateful, blessed, or fortunate that something happened or didn't happen; to be very thankful for something; this phrase is very common in spoken English.

Examples

- 1 I always thank my lucky stars that I wasn't born in a country where winter stays too long.
- 2 Bruce thanks his lucky stars every day for having a head full of natural hair even in his 40s.
- 3 I am so fortunate to have you in my life, I always thank my lucky stars that our paths crossed and destiny brought us together.

To get/catch wind of something

Meaning

To become aware of something, especially something being kept secret, through indirect means; to learn some news or information that has been a secret.

Examples

- 1 It hasn't been announced to the public yet, but I just got wind that the famous TV actress is going to get married soon.
- 2 When the culprits got wind that police were planning a raid on their hideout, they fled the area before the police arrived.
- 3 If I ever catch wind that you are gambling again, I will throw you out of the house. Do you understand, son?
- 4 If your father catches wind that you've become addicted to drugs, you'll be in hot water.

To think on one's feet

Meaning

To be able to think and respond quickly or to make a decision without a long period of deliberation.

Examples

- 1 One of the most important skills a good lawyer should have is to think on his feet when he is in the courtroom.
- 2 If you want to be a news reporter on television, you'll need to be able to think on your feet.
- 3 The job interviewer asked me some interesting questions. A lot of the questions weren't related to the job or the company. I think he was testing me to see if I could think on my feet.
- 4 "Mark is a smart guy, but I don't think he is the right man for the job. He has a lot of good ideas, but thinking on his feet isn't one of his strengths."

To have a way with words/have the gift of gab

Meaning

If you've got the gift of gab, or have a way with words, you have the natural ability to use words in a way that makes people want to listen to you; to speak in an effective, eloquent or persuasive manner.

Examples

- 1 I love listening to Mr. Aston's lectures, he really **has the gift of gab**, he is not only a good speaker but also a poet, writer and teacher.
- 2 Mr. Obama really **has the gift of gab**, arguably he's one of the best political orators the United states has ever had.
- 3 Martin Luther King Junior **had a way with words**. He gave some of the most powerful speeches in the history of mankind.
- 4 My friend Laura is a very good pianist who dreams of becoming a songwriter, she really **has a way with words** and speaks two languages in addition to English.

To smell something fishy/to smell a rat

Meaning

When someone says the phrase “I smell a rat/I smell something fishy” it means they feel something is not quite right. They may feel suspicious of a situation or of another person.

Examples

- 1 "Something doesn't seem right. I **smell a rat!** That guy in the brown jacket has been walking around the parking lot looking inside the vehicles for past an hour.
- 2 “A white van with no license plates has been parked across the street from our house all afternoon. I **smell something fishy!**”.
- 3 Jimmy told Tanya that he has been coming home after eleven o'clock every night this week because he has been helping his boss complete an important project on time. When Tanya mentioned this to me, I told her that I **smelled a rat** because I saw Jimmy's boss at Mario's Italian Restaurant last night around 9:30. He was having dinner with his family.”.
- 4 “As soon as the interviewer told me that I needed to pay a fifty-dollar processing fee to be considered for the job, I **smelt something fishy**. I began to realize that the so-called job interview was actually a scam.”.

To order/to boss (someone) around

Meaning

To give orders to someone; to keep telling someone what to do. To act in a bossy manner with another person whether or not one is actually their boss.

Examples

- 1 The best part about running your own business is, you can manage things the way you want, no one can boss you around.
- 2 Just because you have been working here longer than me doesn't mean you can boss me around. Bear in mind, I never like to take orders from others.
- 3 Mr. brown is tired of his wife bossing him around and wanting to be in control all the time.

A step in the right direction

Meaning

An action or a decision that helps make positive progress in achieving a goal; something that increases the possibility of success.

Examples

- 1 If you want to lose weight and get in shape, you need to change your habits. Eliminating fast food from your diet would be a step in the right direction.
- 2 Practicing speaking English with native speakers can be a step in the right direction if you really want to be fluent in English.
- 3 I am fully in support of our Government's decision to do away with single-use plastic bags, we should all come on board and support this decision as it's a step in the right direction in protecting the environment.
- 4 Switching from gas to electric vehicles won't solve all environmental problems, but it can be a step in the right direction in fighting against the climate change.

To be in the driving seat

Meaning

To be in charge or in control of a situation; to be in a position in which one is able to control what happens.

Examples

- 1 Russians have granted President Vladimir Putin the right to stay in the driving seat until 2036 by voting overwhelmingly in national referendum on constitutional amendments this year.
- 2 Instead of trying to be worthy in the eyes of others, be true to your own self. Never put your energies into molding yourself into someone who is accepted by the crowd, be in the driving seat of your life instead of being a passenger in a taxi.
- 3 Many foreign affairs analysts believe that with the new president-elect Biden in the driving seat, US relations with the rest of the world would change for the better.

To go the extra mile

Meaning

If you say that someone is willing to go the extra mile, you mean that they are willing to make a special effort to do or achieve something. To do more than one is required to do.

Examples

- 1 When it comes to celebrating a wedding anniversary, Imran goes the extra mile to make his wife feel special.
- 2 I have to say, our lawyer really went the extra mile to make sure that we get the justice we deserved.
- 3 I love staying at that hotel. They go the extra mile to make their guests happy.
- 4 When it comes to weaker students, our English teacher goes the extra mile to help them understand the subject.

To spice up something

Meaning

If you spice up something, you add excitement, fun or interest to it.

Examples

- 1 I think it's very important to spice up your life from time to time by going on a vacation. There is nothing quite like a good holiday and it is a great chance to escape your daily routine and see new places.
- 2 Facebook team has introduced a new set of stickers so that the users can spice up their communication by using them.
- 3 Kelly spiced up her speech by using humour at her friend's wedding ceremony which caught the hearts of the audience.
- 4 Nowadays, many apps offer amazing tools to spice up your photos and videos with amazing effects, filters and other editing options.

To think outside the box/square

Meaning

This is a metaphor that means to think differently, unconventionally, or from a new perspective.

Examples

- 1 Jenny is an excellent writer who **thinks outside the box** in so many ways, and has managed to carve her path in the literary world through her perseverance, hard work and creativity.
- 2 Advertising agencies have to **think outside the box** to come up with fresh new ideas that can grab consumers' attention.
- 3 Our teacher Sarah always **thinks outside the square** when creating educational activities for us students.
- 4 As a writer, listening or watching to TED talks is a great way to learn about new ideas, **think outside the box** and be inspired. (TED is an American media organization that posts talks online for free distribution under the slogan "ideas worth spreading")

To show your true colors

Meaning

If you show your true colors, you do something which shows what your real character, nature or intentions are, especially when they are bad.

Examples

- 1 Jimmy pretended to be a loving and caring man but after marriage he showed his true colors and it was obvious he married Tracy for her father's fortune.
- 2 People often show their true colors during a breakup when things are in a state of collapse. Because most probably when they realize they don't need you anymore, they don't have to hide their true identity.
- 3 Sarah showed her true colors when her boyfriend refused to buy her an expensive car. So, she dumped him for a richer guy who promised to buy her a big house, a new car and take her on vacations.

To see the big/bigger picture

Meaning

To get a broad, overall or long-range view/perspective of an issue or situation. Or have an understanding of a situation that includes all the things that it affects, not just one part of it.

Examples

- 1 We usually don't understand at the moment why certain things happen in our life, but we are often able to see the big picture later on.
- 2 I think change is hard for people, especially when they can't see the big picture.
- 3 We often don't see the bigger picture and get lost in the details.
- 4 You need to see the big picture in order to understand the world around you.
- 5 A recent study shows that aging changes the way people see the world. They believe that although the minds of older persons work slower, they appear to be better at grasping the big picture than younger folks.

To get to do something (informal)

Meaning

To have the opportunity to do something.

Examples

- 1 The part that I like most about online teaching is that you **get to meet** lots of interesting people from a bunch of different backgrounds around the globe.
- 2 I think moving to an English-speaking country is an effective way to be fluent in it. You **get to communicate and interact** with native speakers all the time.
- 3 The best part of my morning commute is that I **get to enjoy** the beautiful views of the lake on the way to work.
- 4 I love my job, not only I make a decent living from it, but I also **get to spend** my time working with smart, productive and passionate people in my work.
- 5 YouTube is a very good platform for learning in this era of technology, you **get to watch** videos about almost everything for free.

To keep an eye on something or someone

Meaning

If you keep an eye on something or someone, you watch them carefully or stay informed about them, for example to make sure that they are satisfactory or safe, or not causing trouble etc.

Examples

- 1 When I was driving on the highway for the 1st time, my father instructed me to **keep an eye on** the signs to make sure of the exact speed limits and any special conditions that drivers must follow on the road.
- 2 While I was chatting with my friend on WhatsApp, I **kept an eye on** the watch so that I would not be late for my work.
- 3 While speaking English, you must **keep an eye on** your punctuation as it can totally change what you're trying to say.
- 4 We would like to inform you that our company is offering a special discount offer on all our products soon. So, **keep an eye on** our official blog, Twitter and Facebook for any upcoming updates.
- 5 The woman **kept a close eye on** her kids as they played on the beach to make sure they don't get into any trouble.

To stand up for someone or something

Meaning

To defend, support or fight for someone or something that is being mistreated, criticized or attacked.

Examples

- 1 Joanna always **stands up for** what she believes in and never tolerates inequality or injustice in any case from anyone. If someone mistreats her or others, she will fearlessly defend her rights/or theirs, without hesitation, no matter the consequences.
- 2 The newly elected President has vowed that he will always **stand up for** democracy, justice and equality of all the citizens in the country.
- 3 It is time for the government to finally do what it promised during the election, to **stand up for** the rights of minorities who continuously face injustice, discrimination and racism in every sphere of life.
- 4 Greenpeace is a global, independent campaigning organization that **stands up for** animal's rights, climate change and destruction of forests.

To get something straight

Meaning

If you get something straight, you make sure that you or someone else understands it properly.

Examples

- 1 Okay, let me get it straight, your father left the house angrily and wrote on the kitchen wall, "Enough is enough", and then he never contacted you again. Is that so?
- 2 A friend of mine visited the British consulate a few days ago, so that he could meet the consulate officer and get the immigration process straight by asking direct questions.
- 3 No Joanna, you got me wrong, let me make it straight for you, I didn't mean you should change the way you dress; I was just saying that clothes we wear affect our behavior, personality, confidence, and even the way we interact with others.
- 4 You must read the manual first to get all the safety instructions straight before using this product

To be all ears

Meaning

If you're all ears, you're listening attentively to something or what someone has to say.

Examples

- 5 I was all ears when Andrea was telling me about her trip to Rome, the city of history, art, architecture and a marvelous beauty.
- 6 We were all ears when the manager said he had some important announcements to make for the staff.
- 7 As soon as he heard about the announcement of lottery results on the TV, he was all ears as he himself had purchased five of them.
- 8 The patient was all ears when her doctor was about to reveal her medical test results.

In one go/in one sitting

Meaning

If you do something in one go/sitting, you do not stop doing it until you have finished it.

Examples

- 6 My favorite play is “The oyster and the pearl” by William Saroyan, I enjoy reading it so much that I always read it all **in one sitting**. The play has humor, a happy ending and demonstrates faith in the basic goodness of human nature.
- 7 Today, I added English subtitles to a video **in one go**. It’s about a dialogue between two friends talking about how to be fluent in English.
- 8 I know it sounds crazy, but it’s true, my friend can eat a whole family-sized pizza **in one sitting**.
- 9 One of the craziest things I've done so far is trying to eat 2 dozen bananas **in one sitting**.
- 10 If you really want to lose weight, you need to cut down the amount of food you take **in one sitting**.

Don't get me wrong

Meaning

We say 'don't get me wrong' when we fear that the other person may misunderstand what we're going to say or do.

Examples

- 1 My dear Emelia, I think we're spending too much time together, we should give ourselves some space, because it helps keep the spark alive in a relationship. **Don't get me wrong**, I still love you a lot, but I think we need to take some time off from each other.
- 2 Please **don't get me wrong**, I don't have anything against Magdalena personally: it's just that I don't trust her because she broke her commitment to me.
- 3 **Don't get me wrong**, I am not against technology by any means. In fact, it has changed the way we do many things, but I think its increasing use is affecting humans negatively in some ways.

To spoon-feed someone

Meaning

Literally, to feed (someone) by using a spoon.

Idiomatically, to provide (someone) with so much help or information that they do not need to think or try themselves.

Examples

- 1 My friend Joanna is very perceptive, efficient and a self-starter, so you don't need to **spoon feed** her everything, which makes it a lot easier to work with her.
- 2 While learning the first language, children have environmental benefits, you don't need to **spoon feed** them their mother tongue. They passively absorb it through communication, and they learn it in a playful, interactive and natural way.
- 3 If you are new in this town, don't worry, just open a free GPS app Google maps, input your location and destination, it will **spoon-feed** you all the necessary navigation guide you need.
- 4 It took him 6 months to recover from an arm injury, during which time his wife **spoon-fed** him and did whatever was necessary to do for him.

If you don't belong, don't be long

Meaning

If you feel uncomfortable or don't feel your worth in a place where you're or with the person you're, you should move on instead of trying to stay.

Examples

- 1 Instead of being stuck in an unhealthy relationship for too long, it's in our best interest to walk out of it sooner, because sometimes staying hurts more than leaving, and besides, life is too short to feel like an option. So, keep this saying in mind, "If you don't belong, don't be long."
- 2 In a workplace where you are unhappy because you're experiencing hostility, lack of respect or differences of priorities, it's better for you to move on, as the saying goes, "If you don't belong, don't be long."
- 3 When you find the right people in life, you naturally vibe with them, you don't have to try to fit in, because you share the same energy, mindset and interests. Therefore, this saying is worth remembering when you're in a toxic relationship, "if you don't belong, don't be long."

A lone wolf

Meaning

A person who prefers to live, act, or work alone.

Examples

- 1 We humans, being the social animals can best relate to wolves, most prefer to be part of a pack, but few likes to live like a lone wolf. Amongst us too, some prefer their privacy over popularity, solitude over crowd, and independence over dependence.
- 2 I'm a lone wolf when it comes to going on a scenic road trip. There is something very relaxing about driving solo, listening to soft music and enjoying the beautiful scenery on the way.
- 3 Imran seems like a nice guy, but it's hard to get to know him as he keeps himself to himself most of the time. He's somewhat of a lone wolf.

A stepping stone

Meaning

Literally, a flat piece of rock that you step on in order to cross a shallow stream, lake or wet area.

Figuratively, an event or experience that helps you get or achieve something else.

Examples

- 1 Each of us makes mistakes in life, no matter the age, position or gender of the person. Mistakes are there in life to help us grow wiser, stronger, and more experienced. So be a smart person and use your mistakes as **stepping stones** to become a better person in the future.
- 2 A degree in English can serve as **a stepping stone** to a number of professions. English students have a variety of options ranging from government services, foreign affairs, education, tourism, journalism and many more.
- 3 The scholarship being offered by our government can be **a stepping stone** for many students wishing to pursue higher education.

Never say never (informal)

Meaning

Don't say that something is never going to happen, or that you'll never do it, because there is always a small possibility that it might happen or you might do it.

Examples

- 1 **Amelia:** I have a feeling that I am never going to fall in love again after my hurtful breakup. **Umar:** Never say never, sometimes love just happens, even if we are not expecting it, wanting it, or looking for it. And besides, we don't know what future holds until it arrives.
- 2 **Imran:** I guess, I'll never be able to make a name for myself in the field of music. **Umar:** Never say never, just keep doing your work, we never know what future has in store for us.
- 3 I've no plans to go abroad for work at the moment, but I think we should never say never, who knows what will happen in the future.

Age is just a number

Meaning

Age is just the number of years we've lived. It doesn't define who we are, how mature we're, or how capable we're etc.

Examples

- 1 Don't think you're too young to be a freelance web designer, **age is just a number**. It is not the age that matters, but your skills, passion and experience to be successful in your field of work.
- 2 **Rosie**: I wonder how can you write on any subject with such a level of maturity, you're only 24 years old. **Imran**: Age has nothing to do with maturity, **it's just a number**. A young person may have a mature, broad and logical outlook on life, while some people may have immature traits in their old age.
- 3 A lot of people think age as a barrier to many things, because they think they're too old or too young to do it, but actually **age is just a number**, we shouldn't let it stand in our way, and try live life to the fullest.

Quality over quantity

Meaning

It doesn't matter how much of something you have, what matters is the quality of what you have.

Examples

- 1 Imran lives by the principle of **quality over quantity**, whether it's a matter of choosing friends, buying anything or engaging in a conversation.
- 2 When it comes to choosing friends, Rosie is very picky, she prefers **quality over quantity**. Therefore, she makes only few but good friends.
- 3 Just like everyone else, I love food, but I don't eat a lot, I choose **quality over quantity**. Because I think eating a small amount of food that is high in quality, rich in nutrition, and satiating is always a better choice when compared to eating a large amount of food that's low in quality with little or no nutrition in it.

If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen

Meaning

If you can't handle the pressure or difficulties that come with a particular job, you should either stop doing it or stop complaining.

Examples

- 1 A lot of people will not like what you say, no matter who you are. Get over it, criticism comes with the job of being a public figure, so if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.
- 2 **Employee:** Sir, could you put me in just morning shifts, I'm having trouble working at night.
Manager: Sorry, but as per our company's policy, you must work on a rotating shift schedule. But if you can't stand the heat, you should get out of the kitchen.
- 3 Bill became a truck driver, but the long hours were taking a toll on his health. When he complained to his fellow workers, they said: "It is tough, Bill, but if you can't stand the heat, then you should get out of the kitchen."

Go over someone's head

Meaning

If something that someone says or writes goes over your head, you do not understand it because it is too difficult for you.

Examples

- 1 I came across a phrase a couple of weeks ago: "Fruit ripens not well in the shade." It almost **went over my head**, but I guess it could mean that fruit not only needs shade but also sunshine to ripen. Similarly, our character needs not only joy, but also trial and difficulty to mature.
- 2 Mathematics is a subject that many students either love or hate. In my case, I always struggled with it, and whatever my teacher explained, completely **went over my head**.
- 3 I don't know much about computer programming, so I'm going to take a course about that. I hope what the teacher says will not **go over my head**.

You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs

Meaning

It's hard to achieve something important without making some sacrifices or causing some unpleasant effects.

Examples

- 1 Abrar is a young Pakistani who travels the world on his motorcycle and makes amazing videos, but it's not an easy job, one has to face some challenges along the way to achieve it. The same goes for anything important you want to achieve in life, as they say: "You can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs."
- 2 I know that all the changes made by the current government in policy to make economic reforms in the country are painful for many people, but it's true that you can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs.
- 3 **Eliza:** I really don't like telling people they have to go but our company won't survive the economic downturn unless we cut costs.
Imran: You're right - it's never easy to fire people, but remember, you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs.

On your (own) terms

Meaning

If you do something on your (own) terms, you do it under conditions that you decide because you are in a position of power.

Examples

- 1 It's not to say that I will never get married. But if and when I do, it will be **on my own terms**. It will not simply be because my parents want it, or I am supposed to do it, or my friends are tying knots, I have vowed to live my life in a way that makes me happy. So, when I feel it's the right time, I'll go for it.
- 2 Don't let anyone tell you what to do, who to be, and how to live. They don't know what's best for you. So, stop listening to them, trust your instincts, and live life **on your own terms**.

I have traveled both with friends and alone over the years, and I think there's something special about travelling alone, it comes with a plenty of benefits, one of which is, it gives you the freedom to plan your trips **on your own terms**.

ⁱ Originally, because of its shape, the apple was a metaphor for the pupil of the eye. As one’s eyesight is precious, so is the person described as the apple of one’s eye.

ⁱⁱ A recent American idiom that has rapidly caught on in the UK. This is probably because of the colourful metaphor of the stereotypical TV addict who leads a vegetable-like existence in front of the ‘box’, sitting on his couch. As for the choice of potato as the vegetable, one can only hazard the guess that it has a reputation of a dull, inert and shapeless mass - just like the obese TV watcher.

ⁱⁱⁱ In medieval times, the animals were often sold and traded in open markets, the sellers had bags that were pre-packed, tied and ready to take away, they would publicly display a sample for buyers to know what’s inside the bag. Some dishonest sellers would put a stray cat in bag instead of a piglet. The wary customer who opened his bag to check his purchase would discover the deception and let the cat out of the bag, and thus the secret would be revealed.

^{iv} There are a few possible explanations for where “spill the beans” came from. One explanation dates back to ancient Greece, when people would use beans to vote anonymously. White beans were used for positive votes, and for negative votes, black beans or other dark-colored beans were used. These votes were cast in secret, so if someone knocked over the beans in the jar—whether by accident or intentionally—then that means they “spilled the beans” and revealed the results of the votes prematurely. Everyone would then have to start over.

^v Icebergs are infamous for being much bigger underneath the water than what is seen over its surface. This makes the situation dangerous for ships trying to access their navigation path around icebergs since a bigger mass that cannot be seen may hurt the ship and cause it to sink. '*The Titanic*' was one of such ships. This has led to a phrase which is now used as a metaphor for other things which only provides a fraction of the problem and may have issues hidden from the naked eye. Source: theidioms.com

^{vi} In medieval times the welcome guest to the family home would naturally be treated to a warm reception and a lavish meal. On the other hand, the unwanted visitor who was just passing by or the guest who had stayed rather too long would be served from a cold shoulder of mutton, probably the leftovers from dinner the night before.

^{vii} The term is an allusion to a children's game of constructing a toy house with cards that can collapse at any moment.

^{viii} Pie is a (dessert) sweet food usually made with fruit baked inside a pastry covering, whereas an apple pie is a pie in which the main filling ingredient is apple. The apples are carefully sliced and arranged and packed in an organized order in the pie, so that it can look beautiful and delicious. So, if we arrange something well and put it in the best order it is like making an apple pie

^{ix} As we can't predict and control the manner in which a thrown ball will bounce, similarly, we can't control the way certain things happen in life.

We can also use "that's the way the cookie crumbles." as an alternative to this idiom.

^x The expression "stop and smell the roses" is not simply about flowers, but rather about how to live our life with a deeper appreciation of the world around us. It reminds us to slow down and notice the little things that make life worthwhile. Despite a busy life, it is important to know how to be present in the moment; otherwise those moments will pass you by.

^{xi} Sometimes people riding in the back of a car will give advice to the driver; like, how to drive, what roads to take, etc., regardless of the driver wants the advice or not. This is usually more annoying than helpful. This phrase can be used literally (in a car) or more generally (figuratively) to describe someone who is giving unwanted advice.

^{xii} When you go outside on a pleasant day, you may feel thrilled to breathe the air and enjoy the freshness of nature. Likewise, when something is a breath of fresh air, you receive the same excited feeling from being around it as you do when you step outside into a fresh breeze.

^{xiii} The term 'when it rains, it pours' comes from a common weather phenomenon in which, after there has been no rain in a long time, a lot of rain suddenly falls at once and the weather remains rainy for a while.

^{xiv} The icing or frosting on the cake is a sugary coating applied to a cake, it’s an additional ingredient that makes the cake even more flavorsome, but it’s not the main ingredient, similarly, if something good (that’s not essential or is additional) happens to an already good situation, in a figurative sense we call it the icing on the cake.

^{xv} **Informal**:- A dampened blanket can be used to smother a fire; the image here is of a person extinguishing a lively or optimistic mood by their gloominess or negativity.

^{xvi} A **rainbow** can’t be touched or held in your hands because it is merely a visual phenomenon created by the sunlight's effect on water droplets in the air. Therefore, when someone chases rainbows, he’s chasing/going after something that is impossible or unrealistic.

^{xvii} It’s known as a difficult task to teach an old dog new tricks, as dogs get older it becomes more and more difficult to teach them anything, let alone teach them a trick! So, if we assume it in the case of human beings then it’s clear to see what it means.

^{xviii} This idiom refers to the player in a card game revealing the cards he’s holding.

^{xix} The drainage in the streets in past centuries was so inadequate that, whenever there was heavy rain or storm, stray dogs and cats drowned in the water. People would see the animals floating by as if they had dropped from the sky.

^{xx} The prevailing theory about the expression’s origin is that it comes from silent films, where audiences were eager for action, so directors tried to avoid the use of details and get right to the chase scene- that is the exciting or conclusive part of the movie.

^{xxi} The origins of ‘beating around the bush’ dates back to the medieval times. In those days hunting was a popular sport and the rich hired men to assist them during a hunt. Their job was to help flush out animals that were hiding in the bushes, by beating the bushes with large sticks. All the rustling and noise would scare out any birds and other animals from the cover of the bushes, making them easy targets for the hunters. So, it wasn’t the direct act of hunting, but just the act before to prepare for hunting. Likewise, when a person gives you a vague, indirect response, they’re not giving the real, direct answer. They are just using words to go around the response, or delaying time, before giving the direct answer, if they do at all.

^{xxii} The phrase comes from the Medieval tradition of announcing the arrival of royalty or an important guest at a formal gathering with the sounds of horns. In this way, the others would recognize the important persons, but if a person remained unrecognized by others, he must blow his own trumpet to draw attention to himself.

^{xxiii} This proverb alludes to many different chefs in a kitchen adding ingredients to a soup (broth). If there are several of them, they will disagree with each other, get in each other’s way and it will be chaotic and they may end up spoiling the dish.

^{xxiv} A china shop is a store in which chinaware, crockery, glassware etc. are sold. If a bull walks around a china shop where there’re hundreds of porcelains made objects, he will play havoc and knock all the delicate objects to the ground because they’re massive creatures. The phrase is used to describe people who, whether intentionally or unintentionally, act carelessly, with a tendency to disrupt things.

^{xxv} A calm and smooth sea is a beautiful sight. It hardly takes any skill to sail in a calm sea. All you have to do is set the sails and enjoy the vast beauty in front of you. But if the sea is violent, has high difficult waves to deal with, a sailor needs a lot of skill and prescience of mind for getting safely out of it. Similar is the life. The calm sea resembles a quiet and happy life without any troubles. If there’re no troubles in your life, you don’t learn anything new. Problems teach you ways of dealing with them. They make you skilled in dealing with different people and different situations. Problems make you stronger and capable. So, you must face them with an open mind.

^{xxvi} **A clam** is a form of shellfish with a soft body encased in two equal-sized shells. A clam often lives in the sand in shallow water at the seashore and is at risk of attack by predators when the sea water retreats at low tide. Because that’s the time when people can easily dig them up out of the ground. On the other hand, higher waters make clams far more difficult to find and dig up. Hence, a clam is “happiest” during a high tide, or high waters, because it means they are less likely to be caught and eaten.

^{xxvii} This idiom comes from sports. In games such as football and basketball, the sidelines are the lines that mark the limits of playing area and the spectators, coaches, and other non-players must remain behind these lines.

^{xxviii} As beans are rich in healthy and energy boosting nutrients, eating a good amount of it will have an energy boosting effect on a person and can make him a bit more active and energetic. The phrase was originally used in the past by Europeans who worked with horses, when horses were fed with beans grown only for fodder. After feeding the horse, the owners often noticed that the horses became quite energetic, lively and in high spirits. Hence the phrase originated to refer to this state of liveliness. A more modern interpretation would be the energy that someone seems to get after having eaten coffee beans. The caffeine would certainly make that person lively.

^{xxix} This idiom is related to sports that can also be used in many situations. To settle a score with someone means to “get even” with someone or to “even up a score.” If you are playing a game or sport with someone, you want to win, right? If you don’t win, you would at least like to be “even”. Maybe you lose one match, then in another match you’ll want to settle or even up the score.

^{xxx} The saloon owners used to attract drinkers by giving free lunch to people in USA in the past. So that they could sell their profitable alcoholic beverages to customers.

^{xxxi} If you've ever watched birds in nature, you know that this phrase holds true. If you see a flock of birds flying together, it's made up of the same kind of birds. For example, you might see a group of sparrows flying together. You usually won't see a sparrow, a seagull, a buzzard, a cardinal and a crow flying together. When applied to people, this phrase means that people who are similar to each other or share similar interests tend to spend time with each other. You've probably noticed this at school. The friends that you hang out with probably tend to be people who are similar to you or like the same things that you do.

^{xxxii} A bitter pill to swallow is a truth that people do not want to face but it cannot be avoided. Like a pill must be swallowed, this fact must be taken in. However, because it is a “bitter” pill, it may hurt or feel uncomfortable to accept.

^{xxxiii} A horse buyer can determine a horse's correct age by looking at its teeth. It’s considered the most reliable way to know whether you are getting a good deal or not (as opposed to speaking with the seller).

^{xxxiv} A huge black cloud generally blocks the sun rays and makes the atmosphere appear dull and dark. But on closer observation, we will find the sun rays trying to peep through the sides of the cloud, creating a fine silver lining all around the edges of the cloud. Similarly, in life, we all go through bad phases. But something good always comes out of even a bad situation. That is the silver lining of a rough patch. Here the dark clouds are compared to bad times that we face in life.

^{xxxv} It can be embarrassing to have personal dirty laundry outside on the washing line where the neighbours can see it, or having it hung on drying racks inside when you have guests. You should keep it out of sight, otherwise it could be embarrassing for you or them. This phrase is obviously not really about actually having your washing hanging out, it’s just an analogy for dirty secrets. it represents discussing personal things in public, for example, by telling a secret, talking about something irrelevant or revealing too much information.

^{xxxvi} The term came from the process of accounting, where the end of one’s income column must be equal to one’s expenditure column in order to be solvent. You can also use it without "Both"

^{xxxvii} The expression comes from the act of pointing at a guilty person, often done by a witness in court (who points at the criminal). However, while possible, it is not required that the accuser literally point his/her finger at someone in order to blame him/her. In fact, this idiom is often used when the person being blamed isn’t even present.

^{xxxviii} As we know eating nutritious foods helps keep us healthier, as a result, we won't need to go to the doctor very often, and apples are one of those healthy foods, as they’re rich in essential vitamins and nutrients. So, if you include an apple in your daily diet, it will keep you healthy and you will be less likely to need a doctor.

^{xxxix} This idiom is based on the idea of a lazy maid or housewife who hides the dust under the carpet while sweeping rather than taking the trouble to get a dustbin, fill it with mess, and remove it from the house.

^{xi} This idiom alludes to the human quality of always wanting something different than what he has. For example, a man looks at his neighbor's yard from a distance, the grass looks greener to him, but when he goes near it, he finds out it was only an illusion and the grass is equally green on his own side.

^{xii} This proverb expresses the idea that a person's actions are more revealing of his true character since it is easy to say things or make promises, but it takes effort to do things and follow through. In other words, this idiom means that what people actually do is more important than what they say.

For instance, a husband can say to his wife, "I love you," over and over again, but if he never does anything to show her he loves her, then his words become empty or less meaningful. However, if the husband helps his wife in cooking, managing house, or take care of the kids, then he is actively demonstrating his love for her.

^{xiii} **A blue moon** is a phenomenon whereby the moon appears bluish owing to smoke or dust particles in the atmosphere. The phrase has nothing to do with the actual colour of the moon. It just refers to the fact that the blue moon doesn't appear often, this unusual phenomenon only occurs under rare atmospheric conditions.

^{xiii} If we set our mind to do something, we'll most likely find a way how to do it. In other words, it tells us the importance of will power and how it can bring a change in our life. Will power is the desire to achieve something. If we've the will to accomplish something, then we'll most likely succeed in doing so.

^{xiv} The dogs are often used on hunting trips as they have a strong sense of smell and can chase animals that they spot. When being chased, some animals climb up trees to escape and the dogs stand at the bottom of the tree and bark so the hunter knows where the animal is. However, sometimes a dog can make a mistake and choose the wrong tree – in other words, they are literally barking up the wrong tree!